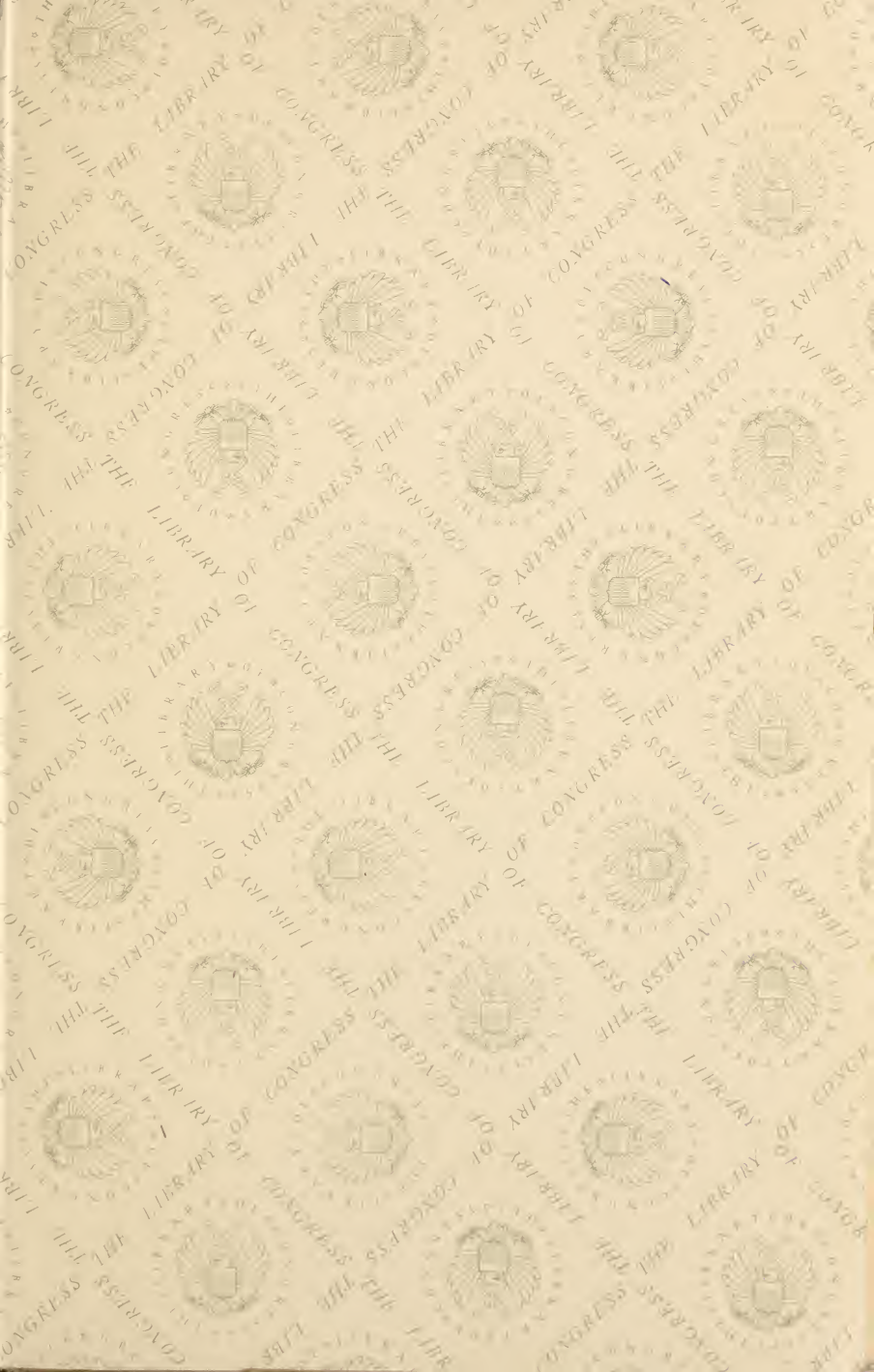


BH  
191  
.G68











## AUDIENCES



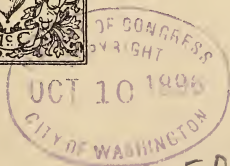
Gould, Florence Pearl Holden  
"

## AUDIENCES

A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO THOSE  
WHO LOOK AND LISTEN

BY

FLORENCE P. HOLDEN



CHICAGO

A. C. McCLURG AND COMPANY

1896

BH191  
G68

COPYRIGHT,  
By A. C. McCLURG & Co.  
A. D. 1896

270589\*



## P R E F A C E

---

THE purpose of this little book is, I trust, sufficiently clear from the beginning. The thoughts all cluster about the two words "seeing" and "hearing." The ambition to be a good listener and seer is avowedly prevalent enough, but the methods of attaining these accomplishments are precarious almost beyond hope.

When one talks with men and women who have had exceptional artistic advantages, and who are considered by their neighbors to be good amateurs as well as connoisseurs in this or that art, and when one discovers to his sorrow that they have actually no conception of the scope and real intent of the art to which they have devoted much time and more money, one feels keenly the need of simplicity, — the need of going back from our histories to our alphabet.

When one talks with artists — men of worth and attainment in their several arts — and finds that they are ignorant of the accomplishments of their fellow-artists working along other lines, and when they say that the thought that “all the arts are essentially one in purpose” is absolutely new to them, one wonders what they have been doing all their years, and feels again this need of going back from our histories to our alphabet.

To know what pictures are good, what are bad; what music is good, what demoralizing; which statues and buildings to approve; what poetry to hold to, — these are accomplishments which mark the man or the woman of culture.

F. P. H.

CHICAGO, July, 1896.

# CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
AUDIENCES . . . . .	11
THE LANGUAGE OF FORM . . . . .	21
ARCHITECTURE . . . . .	27
THE LANGUAGE OF ACTION . . . . .	39
SCULPTURE . . . . .	44
THE LANGUAGE OF LINE . . . . .	51
ETCHING . . . . .	58
THE LANGUAGE OF COLOR . . . . .	65
PAINTING . . . . .	90
THE LANGUAGE OF WORD . . . . .	99
POETRY . . . . .	120
THE LANGUAGE OF TONE . . . . .	145
MUSIC . . . . .	161
THE MUSICAL-DRAMA . . . . .	174
CRITICISM . . . . .	194
THE TALENT OF ART APPRECIATION . . . . .	207
APPLAUSE . . . . .	216
ENCORE . . . . .	220





## ILLUSTRATIONS

---

OLD COLONIAL HOUSE . . . . . *To face page* 27

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS : PAGE

EGYPTIAN . . . . . 29

GRECIAN . . . . . 30

ROMAN . . . . . 31

MOORISH . . . . . 32

ROMANESQUE . . . . . 33

FLORENTINE . . . . . 34

VENETIAN . . . . . 34

DAVID THE VICTOR . . . . . *To face page* 39

THE GRIEF OF ORPHEUS . . . . . „ 44

THE YOUNG SOPHOCLES . . . . . „ 46

SKETCH FROM NOGENT . . . . . „ 58

RINGING THE CHRISTMAS BELL . . . . . „ 90

THE FIRST BURIALS . . . . . „ 212



## AUDIENCES

---

IT is said of us abroad that American audiences are the most discriminating in the world. With true American alacrity we immediately seize upon the "most" — we Americans guard jealously our superlatives — and scarcely stop to consider soberly the value of discrimination. We are vain-glorious of mere magnitude, regarding accumulation in numbers, vastness in undertakings, width in fields and parks, height in buildings and monuments, ever multiplying, inventing, dreaming; but regarding discrimination, — that accomplishment of accomplishments, — even our all-embracing American pride has scarcely taken heed to count this one of its gains.

One looks or listens — why? To be diverted, to be entertained, to be amused;

that everlasting French "*il faut* que nous nous amusions," or the still more demanding and insatiable Swedish national necessity. But how about the amusements that do not amuse, and the entertainments that do not entertain, the music that leaves the ears empty, the pictures that leave the eyes unsatisfied, the words that leave the heart void? What have we of this "discriminating" nation to say of these things?

If critics — artistic, dramatic, and otherwise — could direct some of the surplus American ambition and enthusiasm into the channel of thinking something sensible about all these things, and more than this, of seeing nothing sensible in those worthless "art treasures" which have been too long treasured, our American discrimination might grow into a matter for just pride.

We say and think "American discrimination" in a high-sounding and high-seeming melodramatic way, when in reality this is a matter of individual concern rather than of masses and of nationality. We do not question the



---

social necessity of being a good listener as well as a good conversationist, nor do we question the fact that we cannot all be good solo-players, stars, and prima donnas; but we do constantly and stubbornly overlook the fact that we are all playing the *rôle of audience*, — against our will maybe, or rather without our inclination, nevertheless an important *rôle*. Do we play it indifferently, or well?

The *rôle of audience* — let us defy singular and plural for awhile, and think of ourselves as one in many and many in one, just to catch for an instant a clear glimpse of what it means to look and listen, singly and collectively.

An audience is essential to every artist, whatever his art, and yet an artist's real audience — the audience for which he works out his life — is never composed of those careless and aimless lookers and listeners, who assuredly pay well for their places; yes, even too dearly, for they receive nothing in return, they carry nothing away. None but those that have been

trained, or more properly have trained themselves, to see and hear, to look and listen, have any right to an artist's serious regard or consideration, and truth to say none but those trained seers and hearers ever do receive that regard.

We gather ourselves together at intervals, in times and seasons, to look and listen. We applaud because our neighbor applauds, we are silent because our neighbor is silent, we praise because mayhap our neighbor praises, or blame because he blames. Or perhaps we are ambitious, we would lead, we would set the fashion, we would make the reputation of this or that artist, so we applaud that our neighbor may hear and applaud because — we do.

Or we separate ourselves from our neighbor at intervals, in times and seasons, to look and listen for ourselves, with not the least regard for our neighbor or our neighbor's neighbor. The more shame! We constitute ourselves an audience, and flatter ourselves that upon the whole we make an estimable one. Upon us no touch of art-finesse,

no detail of art-workmanship is lost, for, understanding the technique of this or that art, we alone have the right to disapprove and commend, and our commendation most surely must flatter the workman. We approve — that is enough. Let the crowds go for what the crowds are worth, which is never much.

What a Vanity of Vanities lies in the human desire to become personally attractive, to gain personal acquirements, — wealth and clothes apart, — to attain personal accomplishments, to dominate, to possess, to shine! The keynote of false culture is selfishness, its mediant is egoism, its dominant is pride, and in this key many lives are played out even to the grand or more often the humiliating finale.

But when we see clearly, when we hear truly, are we not giving to all artists our highest respect, our best appreciation, our wisest and most helpful applause? This is the applause for which every artist works, if he be worthy the name of artist. It is generous to attend when an artist speaks or when he paints. To

look and listen — these truly have no slight value in the sum of possible human attainments, and contribute no small share to the sum of human joy, — that joy after which we all strive, ever insatiate.

An audience is therefore essential to every artist, but one must constantly remember that it is only the audience that *sees* and *hears* which can supply this want. We read of Beethoven's supreme indifference to his critics, but on the "Mass in D" is written, "From the heart it came and to the heart it shall penetrate." He was sure of his audience, — sure that his message would find a response; nay, why is a "Mass" written but to be sung and heard?

Architects, sculptors, painters, are not only confident of their audiences but dependent on them, else why would they build? They may work regardless of an audience if the time be averse or unimpressible or unsympathetic; but can we say that a thought once having found expressed form is ever destroyed before it has reached its audience? Art with



its definiteness of form gives a strong and palpable existence to thought. This is art's consummate power. The Greeks intended more in their story of Pygmalion and his work than we to-day are likely to read into it.

There is one point in all art-work, of whatever kind, of which we may be very sure, that is, that every artist works directly *for* his audience, and never primarily for the glory of art, however vociferously and persistently and ignorantly he may state that he does so. There is somewhat in the artist temperament — in the desire to create — which takes note, not only of its own creations but of their environment also, of the humanity that looks upon it. Art is nothing unless its end be human. In itself it is no end. It can never be more than a means, however many statements may be made to the contrary.

Misunderstanding is no greater or less in affairs of art than in all other human affairs, but here as elsewhere there seem to be germinal points of misunderstanding which need to be considered if we

would see distinctly its cause. The two great fields in which all art-work is done are seldom clearly conceived even by artists themselves. Architecture, sculpture, and painting make their appeal to the eye, music appeals to the ear, and poetry both to the eye and to the ear. The arts which appeal to the eye alone, come to us complete from the master's hand, standing for themselves and allowing no false impressions; but the arts which appeal to the ear as well as to the eye or to the ear alone, depending as they do upon interpretation, are subject to grave misunderstanding, — the fault lying frequently in both the interpreter and his audience.

An artist has the right to make just one demand of his audience; the rights of an audience — who will limit? *The artist demands that his audience shall understand the language of his art*; he can ask no more, but this much is essential. One may protest that artists like Coquelin and Mme. Bernhardt do not find just this intelligence in their American audiences for example, but French is not the only

language through which they make their appeal. Their art includes the languages of tone and action as well as words, and these are universal.

As audience we need to study language more,—Line Language, Form Language, Color Language, Word Language, Action Language, Tone Language. We should go back from our histories to our alphabet. We have all learned more historical facts than we can well remember. What is the use of cramming more when we are in danger of forgetting what we already have? Language is our concern, man being essentially a speaking being, and language being the medium through which he utters himself.

Great artists have worked gigantically to tell us this, and through their effort something has been learned. Many men have learned the language of Beethoven. It took years. Some have learned the language of Wagner; some of Chaucer, of Shakespeare, and Browning; some of Phidias and Angelo; of Raphael; of Manet and Monet; of Corot, Israels, and Zorn.

A man who works in marble and plaster all his life must know what plaster and marble can say and what they cannot say. Lessing has told us much of all this in his "Laocoön," but this is not enough. This is merely the getting started. All the critics and æstheticians tell us the beginning. How few tell us how what is said should be said! This is what concerns us as audience. Let the artist say what he will, let *us* know how it should be *well said*, and let us applaud when it is well said.

## THE LANGUAGE OF FORM

---

BECAUSE architecture deals with matter in huge masses, because so many material agencies are essential to any accomplishment in this art, it is named the first and lowest of the Fine Arts. The sculptor for his work needs only his clay and marble, his plaster and bronze; the painter has enough in his canvas and paper, his color tubes and pans; the poet and the musician need only the materials of sound and action; but the architect is less subtle in his art, and therefore more demanding in his materials, for he uses almost every conceivable substance for his artistic medium.

Building is a primary necessity of man, and although the huts of the savage have little interest for the student of architec-

ture to-day, still, to understand *structure*, all forms, whether natural or artificial, are filled with suggestiveness. To know how the foundations of the earth are laid is to know much of structure, and to know all beautiful details of nature's branchwork — above ground or below — is to know much of ornament. When we examine with the geologist the great building up of the foundation of the earth's crust with its differences of structural strata, and the formation of the huge structural mountain ridges and peaks; or watch with the botanist the infinite variations which plants show in their complexity of branches and veins, and their multiplicity of shapes in leaves and flowers, we are then learning lessons of deepest meaning in structure and ornament.

The Fine Art of Architecture is apt to be considered a province of study for the architect alone, when as a matter of fact most architects are mere draughtsmen, the few exceptions standing out in bold relief from the background of artisanship. Architects concern themselves overmuch with a mere drafting of plans, and if by

chance they possess a certain artistic inclination toward ornamental design, they think their end is attained.

Architecture as an art presupposes a knowledge of all available building materials, both those which are useful for support and those which are beautiful for ornament, — the mental ability to design or plan so as to make a harmonious scheme for the eye, — as in the great temples and cathedrals, — and the artistic ability to embody some expression, as of elegance, massiveness, grace, delicacy. Architecture demands of its masters a wonderful breadth of knowledge, — knowledge of structure, geological and mechanical, knowledge of form and arrangement, knowledge of color and its harmonies, and a knowledge of the symbolism of forms for ornamentation. An architect cannot be too learned, too versed in studies of antiquity, of antique and modern design, elemental and complex. He needs all the equipment which the learning of the ages can give, and more than this, the ability to use this equipment, for in this art is brought into play most strongly the



power of co-ordination, — that highest function of the human intellect.

There are always a throng of tourists in Europe and America who go about gazing at cathedrals and storehouses, who are not unskilled perhaps in recognizing a detail of the Renaissance or a bit of Moorish design, but who nevertheless have very little grasp of the *artistic intent* of architecture, and very little idea of the immensity of the study or of the opportunity which building offers for the expression of individuality as well as good taste. Take any detail of architecture and see how full of meaning it is. An architect will tell you, that the characteristic differences between the various styles of building, lie primarily in the various forms of support which give shape to the openings for doors and windows, or in the manner of covering any space, as in roofing.

The manner in which men built their windows in the past ages of history, gives a remarkable index to the characteristic inclinations, the bent, the turn, the inspiration of their lives. Look at the

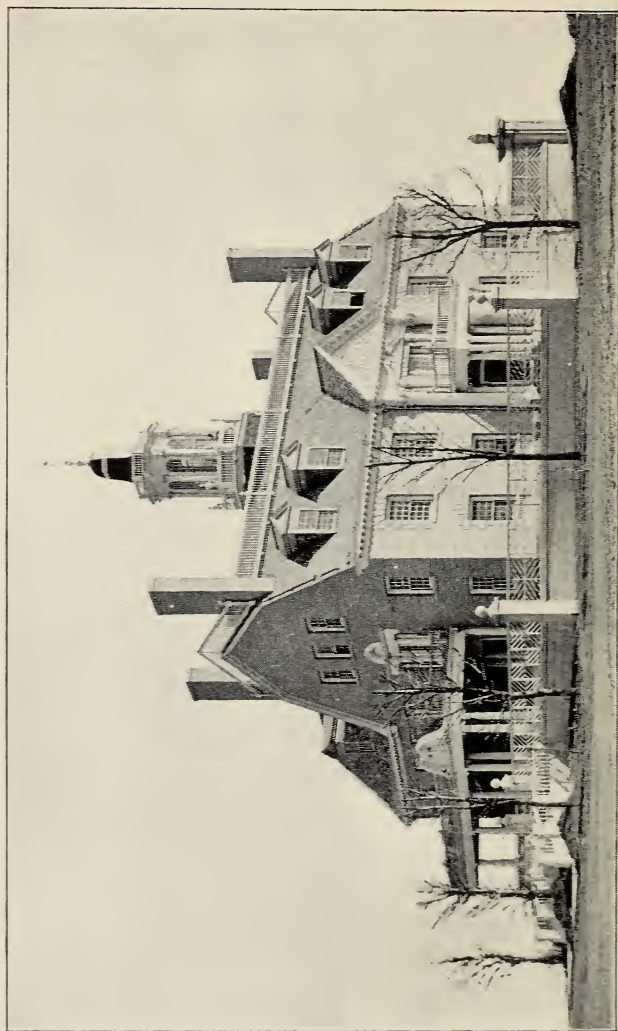
aspiring Gothic windows, the smooth assuring Renaissance arches, the voluptuously artistic Moorish openings, and compare them with the intellectual life, the artistic taste, the ethical atmosphere of their times. To this add the distinct differences toward ornament, and one has an impression tremendously strong and truly symbolic of each age.

Commencing at the lowest of the Fine Arts, Architecture in a certain sense includes or rather uses all the other arts. The ancients, as they builded, appointed a distinct use for each art as an ornament to the structure itself. The temple buildings of the Greeks used what of carving would make the structure itself beautiful, as in the capitals and columns; of bas-relief for decoration in the frieze and metope, adding color to these for ornament; then the higher development of group statuary on the pediment, and the single statue of the goddess within the temple; then perhaps painted pictures as frescos with higher meaning; and finally used poetry and music for their *prayers* and *praises*, — the chief end of all the

immensity of structural purpose. How often have students of antiquity forgotten this end!

Here in the lowest of the arts all the arts are combined, — each in its place separate and distinct; but as the arts progress in expressional power, and particularly in poetry, each lower art is not only included in the higher art, but so intimately blended as to be an integral part of a complete whole. Wagner, the great art-architect, shows wonderful co-ordination, but still in his work each art is distinct, each can be taken by itself, perfect, complete, — with, however, a more subtle and vital interdependence than we find in architecture, and which makes his Musical Drama a unit. This is in its comprehensiveness and its various powers of utterance the highest art, and in a degree balances the comprehensiveness of this primary Art of Architecture.





*OLD COLONIAL HOUSE.*

## ARCHITECTURE

---

TO some extent architecture is becoming "the fad." The restlessness and ambition of to-day seek an outlet in continual building and remodeling, and while a goodly share of attention is directed to architecture as a beginning for the expression of individual taste in interior decoration, still this attention creates a certain interest in architecture itself, and in the effort to display in building as well as in interior decoration, the individuality of the owner.

Modern architecture has at its command the wealth of structural arrangement and artistic ornament that has slowly and naturally grown to be characteristic of the nations which have made the world's history. This structure and ornament have come to us to-day ready-made, just as our words have come; but they do not hamper

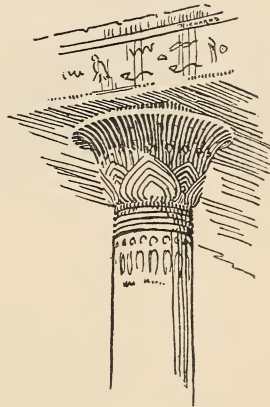
the individuality of the modern architect any more than language hampers the modern poet. The fact that through the stupidity of the many, a large proportion of modern buildings have come to be ungainly conglomerations of foreign ornament and structure, does not prove that there is no scope for originality in architectural design. The work of many well-known architects gives visible proof to the contrary.

Until one has learned to look upon material, structure, and ornament, as an art language for the embodiment of a great art, he has not gone far toward grasping the meaning of the art of architecture. Material, structure, and ornament comprise the medium through which man expresses some idea when he builds, and this idea must be read in the form, the shape into which these are finally constructed. In material for building there is a wide variety, but without considering the eccentricities of material that man, half-civilized, uses for his hut when he builds with ice in the north, and leaves in the south, and turf between north and south,—



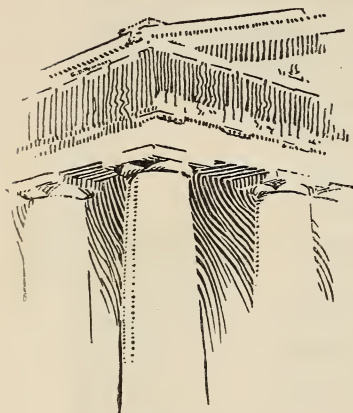
there are vast differences in meaning between buildings of wood and of stone, of brick and of iron. In structure, too, there are wide differences in meaning between the complex and over-wrought complications of Japanese roofing and the simplicity of the old colonial or the classic. In ornament, as well, there is apparent this same variety in meaning and intent, from the over-laden decoration of the Hindu to the severity of the Roman.

The simple massiveness of Egyptian building accords well with that strange country, where labor, the lot of the slaves, was for the whim of the ruler. The flat roofs of stone were upheld by tremendous round columns, sometimes proportionately low, with the lotus-flower capital. Vegetable forms played in Egypt an important part in ornament, as did the religious symbols, the winged-disk and scarabeus, and the



EGYPTIAN

heroic scenes from history graven in relief on their monuments, and colored with



GRECIAN

the flat, crude, dark tones significant of these dark Nile people, to whom the plentifulness of their river and the power of their sun presented unfathomable mysteries, but mysteries which in their own dark crude way they sought to express.

In Greece we find the roof in gable shape, forming a broad obtuse angle, having a portico which is upheld with columns. Here the columns vary, from the severe Doric with the plain square capital, to the scroll of the Ionic and the elaborate leaf-forms of the Corinthian. The or-



nement, whether conventionalized, as in the tiny arrow and egg border, or freely

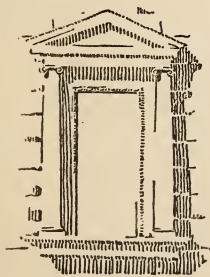
artistic, as in the bas-relief of the frieze, or complete, as in the pediment statuary, is always exceptional and noteworthy. The best that all the arts could give was never too good. Greek art was consummate in its expression of the beautiful.

In Rome, a greater knowledge of structure is manifested;

its practical and powerful inhabitants ruled by force and not by beauty or culture. Here is the arch, with stones cut wedge-shaped, so placed that they bear their own weight, and upheld by columns, as was the pediment in Greece. Power and strength were first prominent, but in the later days came the luxury of imitation, and the grandeur of the Greek



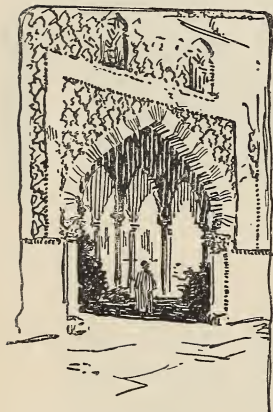
ROMAN



ROMAN

temple façade was contracted to fit about the hitherto simple window, now boasting both pediment and columns.

In the Moorish buildings of Spain, the picturesque arch, in a bulbous curve either



MOORISH

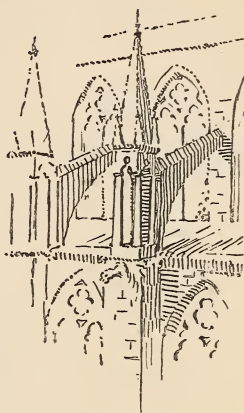
pointed or round, is always in evidence, and above this the flat roof shuts the light of the sun at noon from the gorgeousness and glitter of the gold-work within. Columns are here in great number, and the arabesque decorations and colors show an extravagance and a regardlessness of cost which characterize all

Spanish building and Spanish temperament as well.

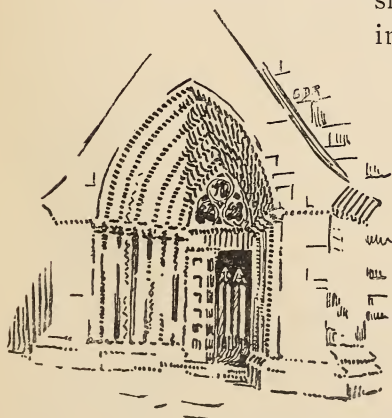
In the Romanesque buildings, another complexity of structure is presented in the flying buttress and in the multiplying of arches for windows and doorways. The arches are in receding planes, and each is upheld by its own pair of pillars.



Ornamentation is now worked out more broadly than ever before, with much conventionality of detail, as in the leafage and branch-work, but with great freedom of execution. Here are always present exquisite effects of light and shade in the



ROMANESQUE



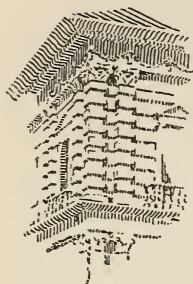
ROMANESQUE

sharp deep-cut chiseling, and a boldness of treatment which is characteristic of the age of the Renaissance.

Florence shows in pride her great rusticated stonework; and Ven-

ice, itself a vari-colored ornament joyously bedecking the bosom of the sea, boasts

a picturesqueness of ornamentation which is gladly left unchallenged.

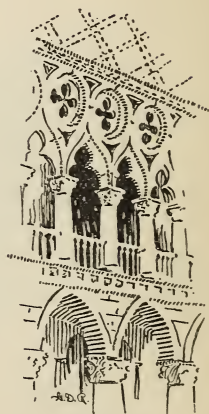


FLORENTINE

America shows everything, from the quaint Old Colonial Homesteads to the varied achievements of to-day. Take the Colonial home, for example. The "Old Colonial" is having its day in fashion just now. Notice what possibilities it presents. The structure of wood or brick shows a utility

of purpose rather than an aim at artistic arrangement. The form of the roof, gambrel or hip, gives, like the French mansard, space for ample rooms below, and in itself an attic with dormer windows, so attractive just now to the searcher for antiquities in high-post bedsteads and high-backed chairs.

The arrangement of rooms either side of the broad hall running all the way through the middle, suggests the amplitude and



VENETIAN



hospitality of the old English Colonial days, when every householder had a little kingdom of his own, unthreatened by far-distant kings and queens and parliaments. The porches and porticoes are for comfort, and suggest the days in England when the Commoners were men of affairs and importance.

With little pretension toward the beautiful, the Colonial house proclaims itself for comfort and domestic usefulness — its aim and accomplishment. It assuredly is assertive in character, but it belongs to a time when the householder felt his right to assert, and his power to dispense with a liberal hand. Here is no crowding and jostling, no curtailment, no niggardliness. This house means *amplitude* and *abundance*.

In ornament it shows some choice details. The entrance boasts a pilaster on either side and an entablature and pediment above; the porches show columns quite classic and pure; the moldings and cornice are always present; and the quaint panes of glass give character to the whole. If one looks he is sure



to find the Colonial *shell ornament*, which is always in evidence, either above the entrance or over a group of side windows as here shown, or in the interior, over the cupboard or mantel shelf, or in some queer little stairway niche. The possibilities of the interior for decoration lead rather toward comfort, sunlight, and spaciousness than picturesqueness of artistic nooks and corners, though the dormer rooms present intricacies enough to satisfy the most insatiable corner seeker.

This old homestead serves far better for illustration than some complex structure of greater artistic pretensions, because it shows a *simplicity of intention* which cannot be better exemplified. The language of material, structure, and ornament here combine to say one thing, and they say it well. This is it: "We show abundance and prosperity in material achievements, and the comfort which comes with such prosperity."

Great temples can chant a classic hymn of praise, aspiring churches can breathe a prayer and whisper a hope, massive tombs can hint at eternity, superb palaces

---

can herald royalty, mansions can proclaim mammon and gold, mountain villas can boast their bravery, lake houses can sing of peace and quiet; but the "Old Colonial House" *proclaims its plenty*. It does not typify culture of intellect or aspiration of soul, but it proclaims the wealth of the soil and the abundance which comes of the sun and the rain.







*DAVID THE VICTOR.*

## THE LANGUAGE OF ACTION

---

THE language of action, which shapes all matter into definite and meaning form, can be studied in all of nature's handiwork — in plants and all growing things, in prairies, lakes, rivers, mountains and clouds. All growth, all development is an active unfolding, a branching forth from simplicity to complexity. The universe knows no rest: the throb of the vibratory force of life stirs all matter, and shapes it into the forms we know and name as distinct substances, and into the shapes we know as organic wholes. An artist who would reproduce an oak must know just how the oak will put forth its branches, at what intervals, in what order; so with the artist among animals, the action of their

lives must be with him an elementary study. As in the animal, added to the action of growth, is the greater complexity of locomotion with which comes its mastery over nature and its added power of expression, so in man, highest in the scale of creation, is found the greatest complexity of action, that forceful language of the sculptor's art.

That artists of the past have exhausted the language of action, is not true. That the Greeks understood man's physical form as mere physical structure, is evident; but they had little conception of action in its dramatic sense. To make this clear has devolved upon modern sculpture. All art-lovers are worshippers of the antique in sculpture; but it is for our use, not for our limitation. Look, learn, and pass on. Perfection is still far beyond. Some nations have strangely conventionalized their sculpture, mingling with it their religious thought; or better, it has struggled through their dense religious atmosphere to a strangely conventionalized embodiment, particularly in the sculptured records which cover



the walls of Egyptian tombs and temples, the frequent sphinx, and in Assyria the winged bulls and lions. That the religion of the Greeks was responsible for its sculpture, we know. Are we ignorant that it set something of its limitation on its sculpture, as well?

Appreciation of sculpture all depends upon what message human action, gesture and form have for us. Whether we believe with Darwin as to man's development, or in the creative design and pattern and spark of divinity, or both, it is true that certain thoughts and feelings have habitually found expression through certain well-worn channels, until every line of the body is resplendent with meaning, from the turn of the eyebrow to the lifting of the foot. One must be able to read this human language before he can hope to know anything of action.

All the plastic arts catch the thought or sentiment of the moment alone, and further than this can be only suggestive. A great sculptor, however, will not impoverish his expression because perforce it must be momentary. Look at Mercié's

"David the Victor." The lithe young body swings supplely with the curve of the sword as he sheathes it. One foot rests, scarcely with emphasis, on the severed head of the conquered giant; the poise of the proud young head and the almost over-sureness of the mouth give great promise of things to come. The head is still bent in concentrated attention to the sheathing of the sword. It will be raised soon to remember his triumph. Here the artist, with conscious strength, suggests the combat that is past and the triumphs that are to come, not alone from this victory, but from the victories of the man as well as of the boy. It is this promise of greatness which proves the work masterful.

Action is the special province of sculpture. Whether the statue represents repose or movement, it must be so true to the laws of action, that we can conceive of the action that led to the sculptured moment and also the action which follows it. Form too, belongs to sculpture, but there can be no art-form without motion, — save in architecture, for there,

assuredly, action would be absurd indeed. Conceive the Parthenon skipping down joyfully from its foundations on the Acropolis, or the Pyramids prancing around the Sphinx.

## SCULPTURE

---

THESE two figures by modern sculptors are essentially modern in treatment, though classic in pose, and illustrating classic subjects. To the careless they seem very similar in pose and outline when looked at from a certain direction; but one is the embodiment of joy and triumph, the other of sorrow and loss. Both are posed with the weight on the advanced foot as they are stepping toward us,— the Orpheus giving the effect of swifter motion. Both have a lyre raised high in air. Both are represented almost at the height of action — when the hand has left the strings with a long sweeping movement. Both figures show the head well raised and turned toward the lyre. It would seem as if there were



*THE GRIEF OF ORPHEUS.*



---

great similarity, and still, they express the most opposite emotions, as one trained to see can tell at a glance.

Sculpture is heroic. It deals with the expression of great thoughts and feelings. Here are two strong simple expressions. It adds to the interest to know that one artist had the young poet Sophocles in mind as he worked, the other had the sweet singer Orpheus; but without this catalogue-information, we know at once that two great human emotions are represented, one of triumphant joy, the other of sorrowful loss; there is no need of a catalogue to tell this. As similar as the figures are in treatment, the simple line of motion in each figure shows, even at a great distance when the details are lost, the difference in meaning. By taking each division of the figures for comparison and analyzing it we shall more clearly see the difference.

Were there nothing of the figures but the heads and arms, the meaning would be definite; the torsos and legs but carry out the expression of the heads, or better, the heads and hands indicate definitely



the meaning of the bodies. In the Sophocles, the head is erect and firm. It is the head that controls, that is sure of victory, sure of achievement. The eyes are very definite and steady; the mouth opened in a shout of joy. The Orpheus head is dropped very far back. The muscles are relaxed, they show loss of power, and the head, turned very far to the side, gives a horizontal movement which is significant of suffering. The eyes — one knows nothing of the eyes, — they are unimportant, blinded with grief.

Next the arms and hands. In the Sophocles figure the hands are raised on a level with the forehead, giving an indication of intellectual control and an impression of intellectuality to the entire pose. The hands are firm and active. The lyre is held securely. The right hand, which has just left the strings, shows clearly a certain mastery in the prominence given to the third and fourth fingers, — the fourth finger always indicating the especial inspiration of Apollo, the god of all the arts. In the Orpheus figure the arms are raised high above the



*THE YOUNG SOPHOCLES.*



---

head and the left one thrown somewhat back at the shoulder, which, relaxed as the muscles are, indicates an abandonment of grief that is very effective. The lyre is just hung on the right thumb, pending by its own weight, for the hand has no grasp, and no vitality except at the base of the palm. This, as is shown also in the left hand, gives an impression of extreme weariness, an outward pushing motion as if he would cast off his sorrow for very weariness of it.

The torsos of the two figures are very expressive, — both a little back from the perpendicular, one with the muscles taut and firm, the embodiment of power; the other posed farther back, with the muscles relaxed and loosened, to show the loss of control. In the Sophocles figure the legs are very straight and both knees firm, still carrying out the effect of self-mastery; while in the Orpheus, both knees have an unsureness and relaxation admirably typical of loss of power. The whole shows grief unrestrained.

Orpheus, sweet singer, divine music-maker, charmer of beasts and birds, mover

of trees and plants, of rocks and stones, incarnation of the power of finely blended tones; neither gods nor men can resist the wonder of your song, the sorrow of your plaint. The old Greek story but half tells the meaning of the myth which you enshrine. Artists alone know you as you are, and though they feel all, express but part. Great was your joy when you won the love of Eurydice, the great joy of love. Great now is your grief, for she is dead. Sweet and subtle is your plaint, yea, sweet enough to enwrap and soothe the great dog Cerberus as he fawns at your feet. Pluto surely was powerless to resist your outpouring of woe, for back to your heart he promises to send your bride. Memory drifts with the olden tale to the scene when you stole forth from the gloomy halls of the dead. Swift and swifter you go, ever upward and upward toward the realms of day. In the shadow we strive to see Eurydice following. With you, we feel the intensity which *must look* though it lose all — for the command, “Turn not back to see her till you have reached the sun,” still

rings in our ears. With you we turn to look, — and woe is ours, — for, slipping back, falling, departing, *gone* is the fairest of earth's fair forms, gone is the truest of earth's true hearts, — for we have not the patience to wait until our eyes "see not blindly." Long is the story, full of symbolic significance, and art will probably never exhaust it. There is still so much to tell. But, of all the story, here is the first grief. This much is palpable — sorrow and loss and self-abandonment, grief and wretchedness; but it is ever the grief that can be sung, the sorrow that can be spoken, and there is always hope for this sort, for it presages the peace to come. It is the unutterable, the silent, that endures.

The Sophocles gives the opposite emotion — the joy of triumph. We can go back, if we choose, to his own Greece and live over the war times and the victories. We can see the councils and ceremonies. We can see the youth Sophocles, chosen of all the youths of Athens fittest to lead the great chorus in Salamis, to honor the triumphs of her armies when Persia is

overcome; and as the lyre sends forth its glorious note and the shout of joy outpours, we can feel the great sway of the freedom of Greece, — her breadth, her unrestraint, her joy.



## THE LANGUAGE OF LINE

---

ONE of two facts forces itself into prominence as we watch an artist's use of lines — their complexity or their simplicity. One artist will use the most complex line-work to treat the same subject which another artist would express with a few strokes. As an artist's impression of his subject is simple and strong, or complex, and delicate in detail, so will his treatment of it be, and the characteristics of his temperament or mood can be easily read by his simplicity or complexity of line.

Art students are apt to be over-impatient in their line-work. They begrudge the time spent with charcoal and coarse paper. They are eager for color, and so fail to gain a mastery of line. Lack of strength, lack of vitality in an artist's workmanship may almost always be attrib-

uted to a failure to gain in the beginning this mastery of line. A mastery of line means a mastery of form, for in lines the artist reproduces form, and form is the intellectual quality in all the arts, and is always the basis for good workmanship.

Consider the meaning of form. Matter in masses possesses certain chemical and physical qualities peculiar to its substance, but is nothing except a mass, a lump. The artist takes this mass, chisels or moulds it, makes a block or column, a jar, a vase, a statue. His thought has shaped the mass into definite form, has given it outline, has made of it an object, has created a new thing.

When this is put as an outline on paper, line must mean not only the angle or curve which gives shape to an object, but must also mean the softness of feathers, the brilliancy of crystals, the resonance of brass, the resistance of iron, the fibre of wood, the weave of fabrics. Line must mean light and shade, must mean color value, must mean sunlight and air, motion of leaves, storm movements, drowsy con-

tent of sheep and cows; and when man is represented, line is fairly lifted beyond itself, and outline shows form pliantly suggestive of thought and feeling.

Style is as apparent in an etcher's use of line as in an author's use and combination of words, for words give form to an author's thought as lines give form to the thought of an etcher. It would perhaps be interesting to follow out the suggestion that there are strong analogies between the style of diction of certain writers and the line-work of certain etchers, for the same characteristic tendencies of thought are to be found in artists who work in very different materials.

Precision of line and variety in its use constitute the strength of line language. Notice the different methods by which artists work. Some fumble with their lines, trying here and there until they hit just the right one and it deepens into a definite meaning. Others like Helleu do their thinking beforehand, and putting down the result, succeed with the first attempt.

It is of technical interest to watch the

various kinds of lines which serve the artist to express the object he wishes to show. A little, blunt, stubby line for a shadow serves to detach one sheep from a flock; fine, quivering, uncertain lines give vagueness to far-away hills and waters. A clear clean curve gives a sweep of motion to a horse's haunch, and a small splashy dot gives fire to an eye. Watch how surely the master-hand swings a curving line, and how uncertain are the scrawls of the aimless mind.

In the study of line, the Japanese have perhaps more to teach us than any other nation. They tell a story of one of their artists, who for twelve hours lay face downward over the side of a bridge to watch the swimming carp. At the end of that time he had just one line on his paper as the result of his long watching, but that single line showed with marvelous accuracy the graceful movement of the fish. Quite a lesson in application for the present day impressionist! The exquisite line-work of the Japanese artists is a rich field for study. Their patience of observation and content with a minute

quantity in the way of accomplishment lead to wonderful accuracy of movement in trees and animals. In figure-work their love of the grotesque and national peculiarities of attitude creep in, — a consideration of which would lead far in another direction which does not now concern us.

Line-work, and especially in the province of etchings, — decidedly its most subtle sphere, — has an advantage above other art-works in having a select and limited audience. Etchings seldom catch the popular attention as do paintings and music, for they are not enough of a picture to appeal to the unobserving, so a certain good taste and intelligence can be presupposed in an etching audience, — a fact of which one should be assured before mentioning Whistler. It is not necessary to say anything of him however; look at his lines, they speak for themselves.

There is one particular reason why it is impossible for the uninitiated to appreciate etchings. When they can see that there has been a distinct attempt to make

a picture, they can see a certain beauty and perhaps value in an etching; but the real value of etching, — its power to record with great spontaneity and concentration the immediate impression of an artist, — this cannot possibly be appreciated by one who has not learned the language of line.

It sounds trite to say that there is no such thing as a line in nature, and yet when one grasps the reality of this trite saying, he is already on the pleasant by-path reserved for the connoisseurs and appreciative lovers of this exquisite and exhilarating art of etching. It must be always kept in mind that the *line* is an invention of man's mind, and the art which uses lines as its medium of expression must use them with a certain foreknowledge of their symbolism and meaning. As words are the invention of man's mind, they are therefore conventionalized symbols for thought, and are quite distinct from nature's great world of tone, just as lines are distinct from nature's great world of color. The etcher chooses to use lines to express what he



sees in nature, and by the free and rapid tracing of his delicate needle on the wax-covered plate, exposes his lines to the action of the acid, and so prints his work, and sends it forth an authentic autograph of his individuality.

As audience we have been very slow in learning this language of line, as alien to our untrained eyes as Sanskrit is to our untrained ears; and yet behind this language lies a rich realm of art, just as behind the Sanskrit lies a rich realm of literature entirely unrevealed to the unlearned. Commonplace audiences have not yet learned what may be called the *personal* preciousness and worth of the etching, for they have been too willing, in their ignorance, to yield this prerogative of appreciation to the connoisseur alone.



## ETCHING

---

IT is only by a patient scrutiny of the works of the master etchers that one can learn the language of line. Its dictionary is written only in separate chapters, and these only on the best prints from the masters' plates. Rembrandt printed the most complete chapter; but modern etchers have added chapters of no mean value. Lalanne's is probably the most conscientious of all the chapters, and while conscientiousness is by no means essential to the success of an etcher — as at least one great name shows — still it is always the conscientious artist who best teaches the language of his art.

Maxime Lalanne shows the conscientious perfection of method in etching and its unfailing effectiveness. For the very



SKETCH FROM NOGENT.



---

reason of the fulfillment of his undertaking, the adequate *expression* of his *impression*, his line-work is particularly interesting to watch. This sketch from the little French village of Nogent gives a very clear idea of the method which he employed in his use of line. Here in the foreground are the strong open lines, diminishing toward the background in exquisitely graded succession, to the fine delicate lines of the distance. In the sky is found the same careful gradation from the strong clear lines at the top of the plate to the tiny ones in the middle, as the sky nears the horizon. The horizontal treatment of the sky is a long approved practice with etchers. This gives an excellent opportunity to introduce the waved lines with admirable effect, for clouds. As the clouds recede in the distance, how finely uncertain becomes their outline — a suggested mist of softest texture. This very perfection of sky gradation, which might otherwise prove its own monotony, has its variation in the few distinct horizontal lines just above the horizon, showing a frequent cloud

effect in perspective, as the clouds spread out lengthwise and apparently flatten to the eye. These lines give also an effect of approximate nearness, so that the tiny incomplete dashes below suggest to the eye a still greater distance of space and air far beyond.

The treatment of foliage is perhaps one of the greatest tests of an etcher's skill in working from nature, and Lalanne has always something to teach in this direction. On the left the foliage is banked together in great masses, the texture of the leafage chiefly shown by the irregularity of outline, and the added lines in the body of the foliage. One general tone is given to the whole group of trees, covering as they do this side of the stream all along the water's edge. Sweeping lines in curves, each end of which bends slightly toward the horizon, give this unity of tone and texture, and the added lines in the body of the foliage, as they vary in direction, suggest the variation of the mass.

Compare the treatment of these trees with that of the trees to the right. Here, the branchwork is emphasized and the

---

leaves are quite distinct, particularly in the first large tree, where their delicacy is suggested by the open line work, showing clear spaces on the paper between the lines. Farther down on this side, this same effect of leafage is given to the overhanging branches of trees which are shown at intervals, lending an interest to these, quite distinct from that of the continuous foliage mass of the opposite shore, so clearly reflected on the surface of this gently flowing stream. A slight suggestion of motion is given to the water, by the few horizontal lines which merge from the shading of the reflected foliage to cross partially the width of the stream itself. In this reflection, the delicacy given to its edges by the wide space of clear paper left inside the curved lines forming the outlines of the trees, is exquisitely expressed.

This whole side of the stream is very pretty and quiet. It is in itself a "reverie," as Lalanne said that all etching should be. One does not care to find the exact shore line which marks the actual growth from its equally perfect reflec-



tion. The whole mass of verdure, real and reflected, has caught the artist's eye and he has shown it just so. It is confessedly monotonous, in calm contrast to the life, movement and variety of the opposite shore. Here the bank of the little stream, dropping down to the water's edge, where lie the boats, bends in a beautifully gentle curve, making a promenade whose fascination is sufficiently attested by the figures seated or walking.

These figures add life and movement to the whole, as do the man fishing from the boat lying along the bank, and the one boat in mid stream with the two tiny lines from its prow proclaiming its movement. The walking figures are worth notice. The expression of action which Lalanne has put into these tiny bits of humanity, is interesting. Here, it is almost impossible to find the "how" of the artist's work. His success alone is all one can realize, for the wooden monumental stillness which many artists' small figures achieve, proves the difficulty of attaining in these any effect of real life or movement. Here as elsewhere



the etcher must needs be "possessed" by his impression, and trust his needle to respond to his most intimate thought, as with some slight skill it assuredly will do; for there is no pictorial art where the exact and immediate thought is so truly and spontaneously represented as in etching. Well-adapted, as its devotees claim, rapidly to seize and imprint the artist's impression of nature, when one has learned with the line-masters to follow nature's moods in line, he will find that an etching can vividly present scenes which, but for this rapid art, would be transitory, and would elude even the colorist.

It would be too much to claim for this plate of Lalanne's that the scene is one which would not have been particularly fitted to the painter, or that the etcher has caught much that would have eluded the painter. The etcher makes us look at nature from his point of view, and though we look at her here in half reverie, and not as vividly as in the passionate work of a Turner, a Haden, or a Whistler, still we find her beautiful; yes a continu-

ous beauty, for it is this transfixing of nature for our perpetual vision that is the glory of the etcher's, as it is of the painter's art.

Exquisite in detail and wonderfully harmonious in its composition, which is admirably strengthened by the architectural work on the right, this plate of Lalanne shows here, as always, a refinement of execution as well as of conception, which is most acceptable in any artist. We gain here a pleasant impression of this pretty little village with its town-folk, themselves not untouched by the beauty of the stream which flows quite gently between its banks of closely growing trees, and its walks which follow each bend of the water, till, lost in its own windings, one finds naught beyond but the far away calm of the sky.

## THE LANGUAGE OF COLOR

---

AS the art languages progress in power, each uses all the lower ones and interpenetrates them with some higher intent or purpose. The language of color does not separate itself from the lower languages, but uses and includes form, line, and action, in its own manifestation. Color is assuredly, if considered by itself, a very subtle language, yet it is none the less definite.

There is an idea prevailing broadly, that the Fine Arts as they increase in value, become indefinite, mystical and generally unintelligible. As long as art has a form — and there could be no existence without form, — there must be a science underlying the mechanical structure of that form. The science underlying music

and poetry must be as definite as that upon which sculpture or painting is founded. The intellectual element, form, is by its very nature, always definite. There is never any definiteness lost in the higher arts; but the emotional element gains in strength, becoming highest when the material through which it seeks utterance becomes nearest akin in quality to human emotion itself — as in music.

Eyes are not enough to interpret the Language of Color. True, impressions of color come to the brain through the sense of sight, but he who runs may not always read, for the language of color, though definite, has a subtlety of meaning to the colorist which is rich in suggestiveness. As far as the understanding of this language goes, thousands of people might as well be born color-blind, for all the profit they derive from the use of their eyes.

Form without color has its distinct province of power, as is seen in architecture and sculpture. Crude color the ancients added to form, but in a subordinate way, the end being decoration, which is far from being the highest use of color.

Complexity in color-mixing, too, had its day among the R. A.'s of the world; but for artists to-day color is growing to be a more simple language, and the keynote of their theme is that "The sun paints true." Whether or no their audiences are altogether satisfied with the impressionists' use of that knowledge in the scales and five-finger exercises in paint so militant on our exhibition walls, the truth in their color-theories must be admitted. It is certainly significant that all the art-world should have gone suddenly mad over one art-form, for impressionism is militant not alone in painted garb. One word to-day is made to include all art-effort, — sketch. This one fact should teach us that the arts are not far apart; that they are expressive of the intellectual and moral breadth of the time.

In the use of line and form, all movement, all expression, is suggested; but the fact of the *artificiality of art* forces itself into prominence. We never mistake an etching for a landscape, and never a statue for a man, — unless the brain is intensely preoccupied or the statue is in

a dim light, which could prove nothing. In these the symbolism of art is always plainly visible, for line and form only timidly suggest the real. But painting, as the æstheticians assert, is distinctly an imitative art. It has the perfect face of nature, and therein lies the danger for the careless audience; because, in the very truth of its effects they see and seem to understand, and forget that they have perhaps not yet mastered the dictionary of color. It may still be to them an unknown tongue.

Light and shade reaches its highest possibility when used by an artist like L'Hermitte, as in unpretentious charcoal he shows a flood of sunlight upon his men and sheep, the early green of spring, the soft color of sheep's wool, the subdued tints of cathedral interiors with the prayerful congregations, the glad brilliancy of the young faces, the dull colors of the older ones, wrinkled and drawn. This able Frenchman shows no more color in his painting than he gives in meager charcoal. Does this then lower color? Say rather it raises charcoal, for



in his work charcoal transcends itself, in that it suggests something out of its real range of power.

If one "does the Cathedral Towns," — as everyone does who goes abroad, — the fact that the church has formulated color, though by an unwritten law, into a language full of symbolic meaning, forces itself vividly upon him. Cabalistic, mysterious meanings have always hovered about certain colors; but after all is whispered of them, the fact is apparent that color is a language, formulated very much in the same way that French or German has come to be written, and of all the mysteries, there is not one but is plainly told on its face, — as any well-directed pair of eyes can learn to see.

The three primary colors have among most nations had simple meanings, intimately connected with man and his surroundings. Red — the color of blood, of life — has always had an intensely human meaning. "Red for love," the old song says. It carries with it an element of emotion, of passion. Blue is the color of the sky, impenetrable. Men's



heads have always somehow been among the stars. Mentality is cold and apparently boundless. The heavens have always teased "us out of thought, as doth eternity," and the blue vastness of the sky has come to attach itself also to mental depths, until it is commonly said, "blue is cold; it is an intellectual color, the color of mind." Then yellow, the flame-color. Among all peoples, legends and myths cluster about the gift of fire to man; but more can be read in the Promethean legend than the physical power of fire. It is the gift of gods to men, — the best gift, — and the aspiring flame connects itself inseparably with the soul-aspirations of men. It makes for itself a Pentecost. The Christian use of the color in church decorations at Eastertide is thus explained.

This simple derivation of the three colors is apparent, but their variety in combination is infinite, and can be carried into a very complex study. The eyes like the ears in this generation are capable of a nicety of color-distinction which would have been impossible centuries ago.

Combinations of tones are tolerated to-day which would have been harshest discord to the ears of the last century, — nay, even were to Wagner's early critics. In color the same thing is true.

Young painters are more than eager for the opportunity to watch some great artist at work, to see his handling of colors, his contrasts, his blendings. This opportunity comes rarely, but a greater is given every day they live. Would they but watch as breathlessly and intently when the Sun, our great colorist, is at work — what wealth of knowledge, what truth of color, what breadth of handling would be theirs! When we learn to see on the desolate sun-dried prairies a play of colors as marvelous as we have been taught to look for on waters, we shall have gained much in color-knowledge. Color means more than red, blue, and yellow. These are *the colors* of the painter, but color in its art-sense means sunlight and air in all their infinite gradations and interpenetrations, and red, blue, and yellow are the colors which must make these manifest; so with the painter the

audience must study these to appreciate their reproductive possibilities. We need a prism to study color, not a lorgnette or spyglass. When we have learned the language of color, then we can turn our lorgnettes upon exhibition walls with profit.

The average picture-audience is inclined in one direction. A walk through a large and crowded gallery makes this plain. At all exhibitions, large or small, there are no pictures which win the enthusiastic applause of the multitude as do the story-telling kind. At the World's Fair, for instance, one would rush along with the surging crowd, — past Millet's "Gleaners," and Monet's and Manet's "impressions;" past Isabey and Israels; past Gérôme and Fromentin and Fortuny, Degas, Decamps, and Daubigny; past the poetic conceptions of Corot, the masterful cattle-pieces of Rosa Bonheur, the touching "Song of the Lark" by Bréton, and the exquisiteness of Alma Tadema. Suddenly the whole crowd would stop and the narrow passage seem hopelessly blocked. The heads were turned in one

direction; all was eagerness and intense interest. After many fruitless attempts, with much craning of neck and straining of tip-toes, one caught a glimpse of "Breaking Home Ties," and hurrying to elbow away, wondered why the world should go wild over this.

Artists are not slow in letting us know their contempt for this sort of thing; but they often do so far from wisely. The fact is apparent that all audiences love a story. Though we may be connoisseurs, with a righteous contempt for story-telling art, still, if the "touch of nature" be true, we ourselves look or listen as eagerly as the most insatiable youngster. Stories in marble or color, in prose or verse or music, always find ready audiences, and consequently pay well. As long as this is the case, — and probably it will long be so, — we may be very sure that we as audience shall always have an abundance of stories thrust upon us, and it is our taste which must regulate the degree of excellence which these stories must maintain in order to hold their supremacy. Where the demand is high

in tone, we can be assured the supply will be so as well.

Artists have hitherto been very chary about opening their portfolios to any one except the few who they were sure would understand. To day they are bolder, and their "studies" are numerous on exhibition walls. "Picture-audiences will understand," they think to themselves. But, in walking through any gallery, one is sure to find many little stories, bad or indifferent, decorated with the mark "Sold," while works of infinitely superior merit are left to go back home, unless some connoisseur is generous. The reason for this is obvious when one recognizes that the primary object of art is man, and that the most human is always the most intelligible, and therefore the most interesting. It might be expected from this that at least character-studies in paint would interest every audience, but this is far from being the case. For who does not glance down a catalogue, past *Portrait*, — *Portrait*, — *Portrait*, until some more promising title catches the eye, and then start off "to hunt it

up." If a familiar name is attached to the *Portrait*, curiosity or interest may lead to giving it a cursory glance; but the nameless portraits, — how few audiences can affect even a polite show of interest in them, — except as portraiture occasionally grows to be a fad with certain audiences. The big oil-canvasses, the delicate water-colors, the exquisite miniatures or statuettes, all have their day; but the day passes, and only a personal enthusiasm remains for them, apart from the fancy of the curious or the appreciation of the connoisseur.

Characters interest people generally when they are unusual, or eccentric, or droll. This would seem contradictory from the widespread studies of commonplace life which now prevail in literary fields. It is apt to be forgotten, however, that our literary audiences have had wonderful advantages for training through the multiplicity of books. Extensive efforts have long been made to spread abroad good literature and to form good literary taste. People have read much before this influx of commonplace. Char-



acter-studies — so titled — in paint, however, are as a rule justly uninteresting because they express too little or no character. It takes a great deal of cleverness as well as artistic skill to make the commonplace interesting, — in paint far more than in words, for in words the interest is frequently dependent upon variety of situation, while in color this “to be continued” privilege is accorded the comic artist alone.

To divide the color-field roughly for convenience, there is the Inanimate and the Animate; in the Inanimate, are Nature out-of-doors, and Still life in-doors; in the Animate, are animals and man.

*Nature out-of-doors.* Audiences are all fairly sure of themselves as to landscapes and sea views. They have all seen such things often in reality, and in proportion as they are close or careless observers they are able to judge. If they have observed much they will be slow to judge; if little, perhaps bold enough to say, “That grass is too green, entirely too green!” Certainly there is shown an abundance of green, very green grass these



days; but when one travels from north to south and from east to west, and sees that the sun paints differently in different climes, he will be prudent in mentioning greens. Plants and bushes and trees, lichens and moss, hills and mountains and valleys, rivers and lakes and oceans, rocks and sands and clays, dew and dust, — an audience must know much of all these before they have a great deal to say of nature-painting. More than these, what do we know of air? Atmosphere, atmosphere! is the modern cry. An outsider, thrown much among artists, with good reason remarked drolly: "One might think that the atmosphere had just been discovered." This is in fact actually true as far as painters are concerned, for it is not long since they began to paint air.

A good sportsman's eye when the wind is blowing a gale and the leaves are rustling furiously, can still detect the slightest unnatural movement among them which tells him at once where the squirrel is hiding. Should our artists know less than the lad who shoulders a gun? A little woodman's craft surely is es-

sential to him who would paint woods. Painters of landscape have not alone to study outline and form in their coloring, as has been supposed. Action, motion, vibration, with them as with all artists, all scientists, and thinkers in every field, is the keynote of study. The impressionists set for themselves to represent not only the impression of form and color, but of motion as well, whether it be action of man or movement of atmosphere. This is a tremendous task, and, as may be imagined, there are few who succeed even in small degree. Monet's name stands out as one who has accomplished much. When one looks at a dozen or more of his pictures together, the breadth of the man's achievement and his simplicity of aim make an impression as strong as his pictures themselves.

Detail of leaves and trees, the painters are fast giving over to the decorators. Who can accomplish anything better in this than the Japanese artists have already given us in their art, which is distinctly and purely decorative? Painters have more than enough to do in working with

action, — motion, — as it is manifest in color. The undertaking is enormous, and the accomplishment as yet but clumsy, for nature presents many problems yet unsolved by the colorist. Seen either by the eye of the calm dispassioned seer, or through the intense and throbbing subjectivity of the enrapt dreamer, nature is still unmanifest in paint. Surrounding man and looking up to him, she presents a certain plianthood to his inner feeling well suggested by such men as George Inness and A. H. Wyant in their very personal handling of her moods and fancies, for there is always with them a clear purpose to be expressed, some mood, some feeling, seemingly nature's, but no less their own. This too is an impressionism of the highest order.

*Still life in-doors.* In in-door object-painting, a subordination of all material objects to man and his uses should be clearly and unmistakably expressed. Still life groups are interesting, not from their cleverness of imitation, but from their suggestiveness of use. The fiddle must have known tone, the bowl must

have capacity, the pantry amplitude and bounty. Beauty of decoration, usefulness of purpose, combination, — all show the arrangement, the intellectual faculty of man the possessor, as the William Morris Decorative Crusade is endeavoring to promulgate.

*Animals.* As to animal-painting: that animals have the power of expressing themselves according to their needs is undisputed, and these expressions, especially among animals that live much with man, grow very human. Any one who doubts the forcefulness or definiteness of animal expressions has but to watch the rise and fall of a dog's tail to be more than convinced. In painting animals, a knowledge of more than their habits is brought into use. The whole range of their lives opens a wide field of interest. The animals are quite safe, however, with their masters in paint, marble, and bronze. It seems there is less "bread and butter art" among these artists than elsewhere, for no one can paint animals well who has not a little of the Rip Van Winkle in him.

*Man.* "The end of art is man." Few audiences linger long with nature or still life or even animals; the many are impatient of the end. It is the purely human that proves the strongest attraction in art, and it is the human element that is first in its appeal, and most permanently holds its audience. "In painting, what more can be said of man than in sculpture?" they ask, crying always like Oliver Twist, "More! more!" "More of ourselves! What do you painter-fellows know of us? Tell us more!"

Sculpture is a grand art. In its greatest achievements it partakes strongly of the heroic. In forceful simple emotions, it finds its freest development. More complex emotions and situations seek out the statuette and hint of the decorative. The Japanese and Chinese, the Russians, the French, and the Swiss, have seized almost every complexity of subject to work up in ivory, wood, clay, bronze, and iron. This seems to be a little avenue of art all to itself, apart from the great fields of art-workers, shady and pleasant, where patience and perseverance prevail,

and the inspiration proves not too great for its out-working.

Sculpture must necessarily be selective in its subjects, — here a figure, there a figure, — while painting can broaden its province by showing everything in a wide horizon. Here the artist can use the force of environment, so potent a factor in the coloring of nineteenth century thought. Here perspective comes into use, with all the rules that mechanical skill can devise for its powerful sway.

As concerns group-work, it is not always successfully attempted in sculpture, and as a rule groups of more than three figures lose something of force, except as they are designed for some pediment or niche, and then, partaking strongly of the ornamental, they are likely in arrangement to be more decorative than dramatically effective. There are naturally exceptions to this rule. A group of six completely finished figures by Louis Gehlert, "The Struggle for Work," is strong in dramatic power. Much of the best statuary the world has known, however, is what is called special



statuary; but although these masterpieces gain in effect by architectural surroundings, they are usually so strong in themselves as to seem no less perfect when *in front* of the footlights on a pedestal without the scenery or stage accessories originally planned for them.

Painting, like sculpture, is often selective in its subjects; but in past years the conscientiousness of the painters forbade their leaving out aught of foreground, of background, or sky, and even took them into the region of angels, as did the old mystery plays. To-day, painters are bold enough to paint an upper layer of cloud strata alone, regardless of the sky or the earth beneath, except perhaps a peak or two of some mountain top, as does Vereschagin, or they show a canvas of grass or water with but a few inches of sky at the horizon. Is it that conscientiousness in art is a thing of the past, or rather, that to-day painters are not so presumptuous as to assume to know the ends of things, as in the old tales where the hero and the heroine were always "married in peace and lived happy ever after" ?



Bold as our nineteenth century is, it seldom professes to know the details of the ends of things. Artists lead up cleverly to the finale and then leave this with their audience. That artist is greatest who has the power to suggest so strongly to his audience as to compel them, individually and for themselves, to carry his suggestion to completion. Very clever chorus leaders frequently omit some crowning note of a musical phrase for which the modulation has prepared the ear of the listener, allowing the audience to complete the phrase. As audience, let us be wise enough to perceive and appreciate when an artist pays us so great a compliment.

The painter, unlike the sculptor, has open to him nearly the whole gamut of human thought and emotion. Whether the intensely realistic representation of the horrible be approved or not, there is little of human suffering and sin that has not found a place on some unfortunate canvas. There used perhaps to be more of this than now since the "fire-and-brimstone sermons" have given way to

"The Greatest Thing in the World;" but there seems still a lurking remnant of fascination about the horrible left in humanity, and some artists still persist in giving it fuel for sustenance. Saint Paul's saying, "All things are lawful but all things are not expedient," is the gentle but potent curb which must be put on the wayward conception of the painter's imagination.

Every emotion, like every musical phrase, has one great climax, and art is greatest when, in the expression of a thought or feeling, it shows the man just before the climax is reached. Even in the drama, — that most deluding of arts, — what would become of the heroes and heroines were it not for the drop-curtain which cuts the climax from view? It is the suggestiveness of greater things, — this falling just short of the climax, — that comprises the expediency of all the arts. The part which concerns each art is just how far short of the climax it is best to choose its subject. In sculpture it must be chosen a long way from the climax, in painting not quite so far, and in poetry

and music we are taken almost to the height of the emotion.

There is one difference in art-methods in sculpture and painting which is interesting to note. In a statue, the chief thought depends almost entirely upon the meaning of the figure itself, while in painting, with its wider resources, the strength of the principal figure frequently depends, not so much on the figure itself, as on the impression made by that figure on those who stand by. If this were not so, many attempts at Christs and Madonnas would be sorry efforts indeed. This method of presenting a character through the impression made by him upon others is one of art's strongest methods. It is the method of Browning's "The Ring and the Book." It is often the method of the Gospel writers.

Besides this, in figure grouping and in object grouping also in degree, the effect depends largely upon the dramatic arrangement of the scene. If artists would study stage-setting a little in the way it is studied in the Comédie Fran-

caise, they would save much labor and unsuccessful effort. If they would play their tragedies farther away from us toward the background, and their comedies nearer to us in the foreground, they would gain tremendously in power.

There was a picture by the Norwegian artist, Skredsvig, exhibited in America in 1893, which depended entirely upon its dramatic arrangement for its effect. This was in fact the only dramatic power which the large canvas showed. It was called "The Son of Man," and following the favorite modern tendency in the north of Europe to paint Our Lord as a man of to-day, clothed in modern dress and with modern surroundings, he shows us the peasants of the little Scandinavian town bringing their flowers and rugs to lay in the path, and their sick to be healed. The arrangement is so masterful, that when we see the slight figure with loosely hanging clothes, hat in hand, coming down the village path, a thrill of something like awe holds us, which could in no way be accounted for by the expression of the figure itself. When we analyze this, we

see a rather shabby, forlorn-looking man with nothing remarkable, nothing unusual about him. It is far from being so strong a figure as in Munkacsy's "Christ before Pilate," yet in this as well, the strength depends very largely upon the grouping.

If one would appreciate figures singly, he must know something of the different degrees of expressiveness which different parts of the body possess. To learn this from individual observation and experience would be a task beyond all but a few great men. Artists have some hints of it given in artistic anatomy; but one poor boy who began life as a china decorator has done more in this direction than all other artistic anatomists. The misrepresented and much abused François Delsarte studied faces and hands and torsos more diligently than any one but Michael Angelo ever studied them; and with more wonderful power of analysis and formulation than Angelo, he left the results of his formulations in definite form. If artists are afraid of the cavil over a name, it is their loss, and they can

ill afford to lose any opportunity for gaining a definite conception of man's expressions, as our picture galleries of to-day too glaringly show. Modern art is struggling toward a knowledge of expression. It needs all the true help which it can find.

## PAINTING

---

FAR more is expected of color to-day than ever before. The time is fast going when a painter can satisfy his audience by daubing the invariable dark brown into his shadows, as if he were working in black and white. There are a few notable and noted exceptions to this, but these painters succeed in impressing their audiences only because as artists their grasp of the purpose of life, and their power to express men's thoughts and feelings, are so great as to overshadow their archaic workmanship.

When all that can be said is said about tones, values, light and shade, middle-ground and background, foreground and distance, one is still ignorant of the painting itself. If it be in reality the





*RINGING THE CHRISTMAS BELLS.*



---

expression of some worthy conception, it certainly deserves analysis beyond the mere facts of its workmanship. Technique, after all, is very little, — it is always expression that proves an artist great. Was it not so with Raphael and all the great ones?

Technique and expression — these are the two points of attack for each of the arts.

In the painting, "Ringing the Christmas Bells," by Edwin H. Blashfield, look first at the mechanical work, — the lines, the colors and arrangement; and then at the expression, — the intention of the artist. The arched stonework which frames the angel-figures is built architecturally, and not merely drawn, as is too often the case in color-work. Here a familiar old griffin greets us, and we are haunted with memories of some place, — we cannot tell where, until we chance to recall the old church of St. Nicholas at Blois with its weird menagerie of strange animals found in no land, but in the grotesque dream of some long-dead chiseler.

From the stonework the eye passes to the gray of the pigeons which form a fluttering halo about the figures. As one of the bells swings in, the suction of the air draws the birds in after it. Mr. Blashfield, with all his ideality, has spared no pains of realism in noting this small commonplace fact. With wings outspread, two pigeons float in after the great bell, and these call attention to this huge piece of metal, — as fine in its workmanship of weatherbeaten bell-metal as one could wish. In paintings, bells are swung in many ways with intentions more or less definite; but as these mighty bells swing forward and back the audience that looks must needs listen as well, — there is no choice, no indecision, their peal is direct, for they ring to us and for us as all Christmas notes have rung since first the Christ-child came to dwell with man.

The management of lines and their arrangement in the picture manifest a refinement and an intellectuality too often lacking among painters. The span of the pigeons' wings in detail admirably

---

accentuates the greater movement of the angels' wings. The framed effect given by the stonework, one bell swung far above, the other below, the strong, broad beam for support, all these lead up admirably to the climax of the three angel-figures, and in these the composition is very pleasing, — the pose of the side figures, slightly subordinated, the curved sweep of the wings inward beautifully balancing the outspread wings of the middle figure, at the same time giving this figure an unmistakable emphasis and power.

Of the color: the one central mass which is the climax of the whole is the figure group where the high light falls upon the pure white of the angels' robes. In the canvas itself the effect of shadows in white is skilfully obtained by a working in of greens and purples; the harmony of the flesh and hair coloring is satisfying, and the subordination of the gray of the stone and wood and the green of the bells is very effective, and does not detract in the least from the central coloring.

In analyzing a painting like this, where the *expression* of the figures is so overmastering, it is well to look first at these subordinate features of color, line, and arrangement, if one expects to see them at all, lest the primary points of interest prove so absorbing as to obliterate the lesser points. The effect which these produce upon artists who have more than a superficial understanding of man and his life-needs, is exceptional. There is a certain breadth — an impersonality — about these angels which is rarely attempted or attained. They are as far removed from the artist's model as anything one can imagine. There is not one touch of "the earth, earthy" about them; no heaviness and cumbersomeness of flesh. Almost "spirit and thin air," they have still a certain realness which makes them truly great.

The movement of the figures expresses great joy. Action here is at an exultant climax. In the middle figure the strong movement from the shoulder shows not only the vigor of action but a certain joy in action, which is more definitely indi-



---

cated by the vitality shown in the hands, as the bases of the palms press against the great bell, and by the head as it is thrown very high and a little back in exultation. Watch a face in great joy sometime, and notice how the eyes fairly start from the head, — a fact which the artist here has not overlooked.

The play of the muscles of the torso is fine. Notice how they are drawn taut over the ribs. They are strong and alert, and the lines are all clear and clean. The torso alone shows the noble emotion of the whole, were there nothing else to indicate it. One frequently finds this superb play of the torso muscles in sculpture; but whether painters do not take pains to obtain as good models as the sculptors do, one somehow rarely sees anything so fine in paint. Painters as a rule busy themselves too much with color, and do not make the effort necessary to understand action.

The heads are beautifully done and very expressive. The sweetness of the head slightly in profile forms a contrast with the positive joy of the prominent figure,



and to the eager exaltation of the figure opposite. It strikes a quiet note of peace in the very midst of this intense activity. The head of the middle figure is superb, thrown erect as it is, in an ecstasy of joy, the hair tossed a little off the beautiful forehead. How glorious is this angel, — for clearly "The light of dawn upon his brows was laid!"

Here is a purely simple expression of joy. It has the significance of Beethoven's Hymn to Joy theme in the Ninth Symphony. It stands for joy, just as Mr. Blashfield's "Angel with the Flaming Sword" stands for the positive irrevocableness of God's decree, as his "Improvisatrice," for a beautiful dream of melody, as his "Education of a Prince" for the regality of royalty. It is seldom one finds expressions so simple and perfect. The highest art is, after all, simple. Choosing in this way, a single emotion to be embodied lends great dignity to the subject, notwithstanding any coloring of definiteness which may seem to limit it in its manifestation.

Luckily for art there are always painters with opposing opinions, and those who find such paintings as "The Christmas Bells" beautiful, but only a "fairy-tale," find the strongest meaning in Israel's peasants with their knotted, work-worn hands, and wrinkled, care and toil worn faces. The world likes the "fairy-tales" best, in spite of the artists and their realism. Aladdin, the poor little boy, has not much interest for us until he finds the magic lamp. To make the peasants mean more than mere work-ridden folk, "well done, true to life," one must have passed by their way. One must have seen as Millet saw. "I see very well the aureole of the dandelions, and the sun also, far down there behind the hills, flinging his glory upon the clouds. But not alone that — I see in the plains the smoke of the tired horses at the plough, or, on a stony-hearted spot of ground, a back-broken man trying to raise himself upright for a moment to breathe. The tragedy is surrounded by glories — that is no invention of mine."

Man has a stronger meaning to Jean

François Millet than nature could ever have, but he seldom looks beyond the pathos of man and his painful toil. There is sorrow enough, God knows, much foolish grieving. When will men put away the slavery of labor and travail, and learn the joy of work?

## THE LANGUAGE OF WORD

---

WORD Language greets its audience with a certain familiarity. They feel here a sense of ownership, of possession, a mastery. They may handle lines clumsily, may know naught of moulding and less of color; but of words they are sure. So they are, but only in degree. There has always been an effort to create good literary taste, but there is still a mistake at the bottom of the matter. The old bards and their eager listeners, yes, even the meister-singers, and the minne-singers, and the troubadours, caught more of the *reality* of literature than the half-blind, spectacled book-worm of to-day.

We have learned to read with our eyes, when we should have learned with our

ears. The discordant, unreadable sentences that force themselves too often into prominence, are never written by men with ears trained to a fine distinction and knowledge of sound. Words are only signs for sounds, as notes in music are, no more, no less, save that, — unlike the inorganic note, — words in their structure are organic, and show the evolution of their making, or the desolation of their marring. “Rare Ben Jonson” wrote centuries ago in his grammar of the English Language, that “the writing of it (language) was but an accident.” Scientists tell us that words, though taken into the brain through the eye, are there recorded as *impressions of sound* and not of sight, and our own youthful struggles as we spelled out our c-a-t, should have taught us how words are made. But somehow all this has had little effect, and men and women keep on with their eye-reading, while they might as well be deaf-mutes as far as their appreciation of Word Language is concerned.

Take a parallel case. Because an

orchestra leader has acquired the ability to pick up a score of one of Beethoven's symphonies, for example, and with his eyes follow the parts assigned to the flutes, to the strings, to the brass and the drums, and by an effort of memory conceive an impression of what the sound of the whole would be, does it follow that music is an art to be read by the eye? Assuredly not; and no more does it follow, from the fact that every person of moderate education has acquired the mental ability to gain impressions of sounds through the reading of a printed page, that this eye-reading forces literature to appeal to the eye alone.

Literature as an art uses, as its material for construction, words which are in reality articulated and enunciated sounds. For literature there must be therefore a *hearing* audience. The arts as they advance in order become more aggressive, and though gaining in their resources, still retain all the powers of utterance which the lower arts possess. Architecture claims co-ordination and the management and the shaping of material into

form. Sculpture claims all this, and adds the meaning of action. Painting keeps the co-ordination, composition, and form of architecture, the action of sculpture, and adds color. Music adds tone to these, and poetry claims all. So in literature — as will be shown later — there is an appeal to the eye in line, form, and action, as there is of color and music to the ear.

Every literary audience divides itself, either affectedly or sincerely, one half clamoring for prose, the other half for poetry. In considering the Art Languages it must not be forgotten that in art, form is always present. There must always be structure, and structure can be considered from a purely scientific point of view. When literature is considered scientifically, it is found that prose is merely a wild variety of verse, and because verse has a scientific, mechanical structure, poetry is all that concerns us here. Some audiences are considerably shocked at this aggressive way of including prose in verse and calling it "merely a wild variety of verse;" but



they can always be reasoned into it, and the fact remains that they cannot reason themselves out.

It has been said that consonants are the bones of language, vowels its flesh and blood. In the making of verse, vowels and consonants play a structural part as well as words, sentences, and thoughts. Thoughts form the framework upon which the verse-structure is built. Its beams arch over the void of space, which is silent in its lack of intent, until the mind conceives a structure, and thought becomes definite. The phrasing of the words covers this framework of thought, and sounds ornament the whole. In architecture, ornament was found to be of great importance; in fact, as an art, architecture puts forth ornament as its most characteristic achievement. Even beyond the greatness of ornament in architecture is the sound-ornamentation of verse. Its contrasts, its repetitions, its combinations, change in never-ending beauty and variety. There is a strong analogy between ornament in verse, as rhyme and alliteration, and ornament in

architecture, which may be of interest to the curious.

So verse comes to be known with its framework, its covering, and its ornament, and so the poet is known as architect. He is more than architect, however, for an architect creates merely the design for the contractor and laborers to carry out, while the poet, having created his plan, must be both contractor and laborer, and himself work out the design to its completion, for he is perforce a handicraftsman.

Some people have taken pains to let us know that much excellent verse has been written in a planless, purposeless way. So have good houses been built without an architect's plan; but this does not tend to do away with the need of plan for either poet or architect. Plans sometimes do not become consciously apparent except in the process of execution. Good talkers frequently speak out a thought which crystallizes itself in its utterance and is as much a surprise to speaker as to listener. It is not unpremeditation of plan, but lack of plan that is to be deplored, and which constantly forces

itself upon us in our hosts of miserable rhymesters. There is one cause at the bottom of it all, and that is ignorance, — ignorance of the existence of a science underlying the making of verse.

There are special schools to train architects, special schools to train sculptors and painters, special schools to train musicians and composers; where is the school to train poets? Is it not strange that this has not occurred to the intelligent world? Is it not strange that poetry should be the only art for which a special training is deemed unnecessary? Yet the world has learned by heart the saying that "good poets are *made* as well as born." The world helps every art-worker but the poet, and him it leaves to struggle alone, gathering such tools as he can find, dropped half-worn and often abused from older poets, and striving with a shameful little bundle of rhetorical metre to shape his message for mankind. Wiser heads, older heads, do not even take the pains to tell him what he ought to learn. They tell an architect to study mechanical strains, the tensile strength

of wood and stone, of iron and steel. Should they not tell a poet to study the tensile strength of his material as well, the strength of vowels and consonants, of syllables and words, of phrases, sentences, and paragraphs? Sound is a far more intricate study than iron and stone, and to know the quality of his material for use and beauty is as essential to the poet as to the architect.

Because words are used with a certain definiteness in speech, to speak well is considered sufficient mastery of language for a poet; but music is used too with equally definite purpose in speech, yet never has this been considered sufficient training for a singer. This last point has been so little considered that to make it clearer are inserted, by way of parenthesis, a few extracts from a lecture given in the Assembly Room of the Woman's Building, at the World's Fair in 1893, on —

*Music in Speech.*

Music implies an instrument. In speech the instrument is human; it is a living instrument.

If one should stand before a singing-master and say, "I wish to sing. Tell me, where is the instrument of song?" he would undoubtedly say, "Here, in your throat of course," or perhaps he might add, "and your lungs and head."

If one should take a violin to a violinist, and say, "I wish to play. Show me what part of this violin is the instrument," there could be but one answer. "Every fibre of the wood, each bit of glue and varnish, add to the tone, and determine its quality. The whole violin is the instrument." The fact that the sound is made by drawing the bow across the strings in no way determines the instrument, as is very easily proved by playing on some well-stretched strings with no resonating body supporting them. The tone is inconceivably mean and thin compared with the full, rich voice of the violin.

As the unsurpassable materials of the violins of the old masters mark their instruments as superb in tone, so the quality of the materials in the human instrument determines its tone value.

As the varnish is to the violin, so is the skin to the human instrument; and the wood is like the muscles and bones, as these shape the air cavities for resonance of tone, and as they vibrate, reinforcing the tone.

As the bow drawn across the violin strings sets them in motion in longer or shorter sections according to the pitch of the note, so the breath sent from the lungs passes across the vocal cords in the larynx, and sets them vibrating in longer or shorter sections according to pitch. The vocal apparatus, as an instrument, does not belong to the violin class assuredly, but is a reed instrument of the hautboy class, though the violin serves for illustration.

There is a marvelous power which this human instrument possesses — living and breathing as it is — which gives it a superiority over every possible mechanical contrivance of wood, brass, or catgut. The player being inseparable from his instrument can control at will both its shape, its outline, and its material.

If we watch the evolution of the violin



we shall find that it has grown through many stages, from a crude unmanageable instrument, to the shapely creature we know and see it to-day, and we know that the least change in its undulating form or the slightest difference in the form and placing of the s-shaped openings on its front, materially alters its tone quality. Helmholtz tells us that in all instruments of beautiful tone, when divided perpendicularly and horizontally, the corresponding opposite sections and divisions will be found to be uniform in shape. How few human instruments could undergo this test!

Let us consider the human instrument just a minute. Its materials of skin and flesh, blood and bone, determine its quality. Its outline, so various and flexible, gives form to the instrument and to the tone as well. Where we find a flabby, formless instrument, we have also a flabby, unshapen tone. We know that there are some exceptions to this rule, however, for we know great song artists whose instruments seem hopelessly shapeless, that is, from the outside; but *as*



*artists*, we always find that they have gained an exceptional control over the inner organs most intimately connected with tone-production, which in a manner counteracts the outer shapelessness of their instruments. Nevertheless, this gives no excuse for physical imperfections. The master hand can always transcend the most unworthy instrument.

Let us consider now the way in which the materials of this human instrument mar its beauty of tone otherwise than by the actual outer shape which they give to the instrument itself. In an organism where the nerves are fairly tied into knots, and the flesh fibres form bunches and knots of muscle, and so not only stop the flow of the vital nerve force, but materially impede, and sometimes almost stop, the circulation of the blood,—such imperfections of the instrument cause the same impure and unhealthy tones which knots, cracks, and blemishes cause in the wood of the violin, and even greater loss in purity of tone than the latter could possibly cause.

The perfecting of the human instrument is not alone the beginning for the possibility of any pure, or even good tone in song and speech; but it is also the absolute law and appealing need of health, and this demand is the paramount life necessity of all human kind, and its satisfaction lies easily within the power of each of us.

Now that we have considered the structure of this instrument, through which song and speech are vibrantly formed, let us distinguish the difference in its use in song and in speech.

Without going into the science of sound, let us take for granted that we can all distinguish immediately the difference between a musical sound and noise.

The needs of every-day conversation do not place quite the same demands upon the voice in speech as is demanded of speech when it becomes the art-language of the poet, because in every-day life our emotions rarely rise to that passionate height which belongs distinctly to the

realm of poetry; but as we are considering the use of the voice in the art of song, we must use for comparison the use of the voice in the art of speech, that is, in poetry.

If we sift the matter to the bottom we find just this one simple difference between the use of the instrument in song and in speech. In song we use an arbitrary, conventional scale, the octave on the piano, composed of thirteen half-tones; while in speech, — the human ear when trained being able to distinguish nine distinct tones in the space of every whole tone on the piano, — we use all the intermediate tones in speech-inflections rather than confine the voice to prolonged single tones as in song.

At first this distinction seems to separate the two arts of song and speech; but in reality the distinction itself tends to disappear in different forms of the two arts. For in lyric poetry the use of the voice approaches song very nearly, while in dramatic singing the use of the voice — as it brings in the color-shadings of

the tiny intermediate tones — approaches very nearly to speech. So we come at last to the realization that the difference between the use of the voice in song and its use in speech is merely an arbitrary difference, which, in extreme examples of either, entirely disappears, and proves their unity. The range of the voice is the same, the consideration of pitch is the same, save that speech in its more complex and formless melodies presents a complication of which song, in its conventionalized scale, takes no account.

With these melodies — the tunes of speech — we are all familiar, and not only familiar, but we never fail to grasp from them a definite meaning. When we hear, for instance, a child say with all the energy of scorn, "Oh, I just love that girl!" our ears never fail to carry to our understanding the message of hate and scorn which the tune of the voice indicates, while the words speak their unintended message of love.

Just a few words about the significance of the voice in speech and song. Take a

note on the piano — say middle C; sound it with the voice. In it we find, if we analyze the acoustics of tone, one fundamental tone and several overtones. Now the overtones give the quality to the voice. Their variety and distinctive peculiarities not only distinguish one person's voice from another's, but in song and speech they give color to the sound, which is just as definite and as readily perceived by the ear as the colors which the painter uses are perceptible to the eye.

(This last is of course apparent only in actual illustration in tone, but will be suggested in following color in its art-use in poetry when we come to consider some single poem.)

It is already plain that poetry has an architectural construction and therefore as an art includes all that is of interest in the Fine Art of Building. Whatever appeals to us in architecture, can be followed with as great profit as well as pleasure, in verse-making. More than this, it has been found that words, being

mere symbols of sound, and sound including music and color, poetry uses both music and color in its expression. The color will be followed more in detail later, for it is particularly interesting.

There is just one of the arts which has not yet been claimed, — sculpture. It was found that sculpture dealt with action. Sculpture takes the result of an action and imprisons it, permanent, forever. The strength or the weakness of the art lies in its ability or failure to give us an instantaneous impression, as in painting or in architecture. Sculpture in itself can show the happening of just one moment of time, — it is a permanent art. The sculptor, however, is comparatively great as he has the ability to awaken in his audience a conception of the chain of circumstances which led to his sculptured moment and the climax which should grow out of it. This a sculptor can do, and in so doing he lifts his work above that of the gravestone chiseler and the artisan. But sculpture at its best can only timidly suggest the growth and culmination of a thought or feeling; architecture suggests

it less, painting more; but poetry and music do more than suggest, — they follow out the very development of the thought in time and space, just as its creator conceived it, and in this lies the supremacy of these higher arts. The permanent plastic arts imprison or crystallize thoughts and feelings; the interpretative arts develop them.

This development of thought is in itself an action because it is active, and requires time for its out-working; but there is a more apparent demonstration of action which allies poetry and sculpture, — nay, which includes sculpture in poetry.

Action, in its simple art-sense, deals with the bodily movements of man as he uses them to supplement his words in order to express fully his thoughts and feelings. If one tries to say something sensible to somebody without moving a single muscle, — feet and hands quiet, and every muscle of the face perfectly still, except those that are necessary for pronunciation, — he will soon find what an impossible and idiotic task he has set



for himself; and yet some persons are thoughtless enough to say that they never use gestures. These are usually persons who have acquired a certain suppression of self, caused by some incident or environment far back in their lives, and flatter themselves that they have learned self-control. They keep their bodies very still and their faces wonderfully so; but watch the play of the tiny muscles about the eyes and mouth, and the occasional moving of the wrists and fingers. These small elliptical gestures reveal more in action than they might wish to have known, and their very self-suppression becomes, in spite of themselves, a self-revelation.

Action is necessary to expression as well as to locomotion, this much must be admitted. That action in itself is a clearly intelligible language, we are made aware in the child-delighting Pierrot, and in the present interest in pantomime on the French stage, — that foster-mother of dramatic art. In America this has not forcibly come to us yet. Steele Mackaye hoped to show it in his "Spectatorium,"

the deplorable failure of which caused his death.

Narrative and dramatic poetry deal primarily with action, — that is plain; and contemplative poetry deals with the growth, development, attainment of a thought, which is in itself a form of action. There is one kind of poetry, however, which deals with action less than any other, that is, nature description. But nature description is not poetry's best field; the painter rightly claims this as his strength. Look at the unturned pages of nature descriptions in our poets and see the well-thumbed leaves of narrative or distinctly human poetry, — poetry which is self-expressive and personal. Landscape-art *per se* belongs to the painter. He best can give form to trees, and fields, and waters; but there is a realization of the spirit of nature which men like Inness and Corot with all their strength can only suggest, but which poets, like Lanier, and musicians, like Beethoven and Wagner, can fully attain.

Take Sidney Lanier's "Sunrise from the Marshes of Glynn," and catch the

wonderful spirit of nature which he idealizes and raises up to meet the spirit of man. In the very beginning we feel it brooding, —

“In my sleep I was fain of their fellowship, fain  
Of the live-oak, the marsh, and the main.  
The little green leaves would not let me alone in my  
sleep ;  
Up-breathed from the marshes, a message of range  
and of sweep,  
Interwoven with waftures of wild sea-liberties, drifting,  
Came through the lapped leaves sifting, sifting,  
Came to the gates of sleep.”

Hear Beethoven's great Pastoral Symphony and you will know the spirit of nature better than you ever dreamed of her before. Listen to Wagner's "Hymn to the Evening Star" in "Tannhäuser," and feel the nature spirit in it. It is marvelous to think that this man with only a few poor notes has so put them together as to give a never-failing impression of air and space, of evening sky and the tremulous first star, and the space and air and love in the soul of man — Hindu-like — Platonic!

# POETRY



## IN A GONDOLA

"Songs of Italy." — JOAQUIN MILLER

### I

'T WAS night in Venice. Then down to the tide,  
Where a tall and a shadowy gondolier  
Leaned on his oar, like a lifted spear : —  
'T was night in Venice ; then side by side  
We sat in his boat. Then oar a-trip  
On the black boat's keel, then dip and dip ; —  
These boatmen should build their boats more wide,  
For we were together, and side by side.

### II

The sea it was level as seas of light,  
As still as the light ere a hand was laid  
To the making of lands, or the seas were made.  
'T was fond as a bride on her bridal night  
When a great love swells in her soul like a sea,  
And makes her but less than divinity.  
'T was night, — The soul of the day, I wis :  
A woman's face hiding from her first kiss.

## III

'T was night in Venice. On o'er the tide —  
These boats they are narrow as they can be,  
These crafts they are narrow enough, and we,  
To balance the boat, sat side by side —  
Out under the arch of the Bridge of Sighs,  
On under the arch of the star-sown skies:  
We two were together on the Adrian Sea, —  
The one fair woman of the world to me.

## IV

These narrow built boats, they rock when at sea,  
And they make one afraid. So she leaned to me;  
And that is the reason alone there fell  
Such golden folds of abundant hair  
Down over my shoulder, as we sat there.  
These boatmen should build their boats more wide,  
Wider for lovers; as wide — Ah, well!  
But who is the rascal to kiss, and tell?

*Venice, 1874.*

*Architecture in Poetry*

This little poem is built very beautifully, its verse-making is nearly perfect. Its builder is a good workman, skilled in his art, master of his craft. Follow first his beams of thought; see how he lays them, how joins and uprears the strength of his structure, so that his after-thought of ornament prove not meaningless and vain.

Being a song, the structure is simple as possible. The title, "In a Gondola," gives the place, it locates the structure immediately; the first stanza shows the surroundings; the very first rhyme — "tide" with "side by side" — announces the romantic purpose of the song, and the opening words, "'T was night," reveal the way in which the plans are to be carried out, the treatment of the motif. This builder is notably strong in his power of climax, so for the height of his achievement one must look to the climax of his plan, — that climax which in lyric poetry is found at the very end of the poem, — for here the builder brings in the human element, the dramatic touch that gives character and intent to the whole melody of the song, —

"Wider for lovers ; as wide — Ah, well !  
But who is the rascal to kiss, and tell ?"

These last lines he brings in to crown his work, as the architect crowns his building with some golden dome, superb in curve, glorious in height; but their force will be better realized when following out his plan consecutively.

---

The first stanza of the poem gives the foundation. In this stanza the first statement of the idea is fully made, as some composer might introduce his full theme in the first melodic movement. The completeness of this first statement of the thought will be more apparent when watching the action of the poem.

The second stanza broadens out into a gloriously wide floor-space. There are touches here of thought as all-embracing — within its distinctly human zone — as in any of the grand, serious poems of our language. See how the description keeps us just hovering over the surface of the waters, the “level as seas of light” runs all through it, and we are lifted no higher in the building, until, in the third stanza, we are taken “out under the arch of the star-sown skies.”

Notice in passing that Joaquin Miller has very beautifully mingled his touches of sentiment with comedy fun of the *vers-de-société* kind, as, —

“and we,  
To balance the boat, sat side by side” —



with thoughts that have some of the breadth of the sublime. This might be called distinctly a *vers-de-société* lyric, and yet very different is it in tone from the conventionality, or worse, the malice of sentiment, — the lack of real respect and deep feeling, — which is found in Horace, and later in Matthew Prior and his eighteenth century contemporaries. We ought to be hopeful for our modern gay society verse. Its treatment of sentiment is far truer than ever before.

“ We two were together on the Adrian Sea, —  
The one fair woman of the world to me.”

The ending of this third stanza is made to hold much of deep feeling. The romance of the theme asserts itself, and the lesser thought-beams become insignificant in comparison. The romance spans dome-like a little room-space all its own, — silent and aware.

It is excellent art which mixes feeling and fun to the detriment of neither, and this is well done as we go on to the last stanza. We have had nothing of the woman as yet, and the structural thought

---

hastens on to its climax, telling us of her in the one masterly line, —

“Such golden folds of abundant hair ”

this is all. The poet suggests the sweeping curve that spans the arch, and his audience is left to fill in the detail of the thought.

He is very clever in his management of the whole structure, for he centres our interest on the woman, tantalizes us by the one impression of her which he gives, and then leaves us to build the tower of climax ourselves.

“As wide,” — just as he allures us with expectancy, and we suspend thought to catch the beauty of some crowning phrase, he gayly breaks off —

“Ah, well !

But who is the rascal to kiss, and tell ? ”

Without going into the structure of language, of tones, or even of words, which would be essential in making a scientific analysis of verse-building, it will be sufficient just to glance at the ornament, and then pass on to the thoughts

suggested by the chiseling and the pigments. From an architectural point of view verse-ornaments are of various kinds; but it will be enough to consider only the simple ones of rhyme and alliteration. Few poets take the pains to place their verse-ornaments properly and harmoniously, and to polish them acceptably. The same laxity can be complained of in architects as well. Workmanship in ornamentation can be too minute and too troublously painstaking, but never too perfect. Sometimes a rhyme left roughly chiseled—a little uncouth and clumsy—can be used to heighten the effect of expression, as in some of Browning's character studies; but generally we prefer the fine quality of workmanship which a poet like Shakespeare presents.

The simple verse-ornaments which this poem boasts are easily apparent, the rhymes "tide" and "side," "gondolier" and "spear," "trip" and "dip," "wide" and "side;" the alliterations are pretty,—the *l*, in "*Leaned on his oar like a lifted spear*," the *b*, in "*These boatmen should build their boats more wide*," and the *s* in

"sat side by side." It is easy enough to follow them at choice; and though we remember that the poet's own ear is his only law, it can still be demanded of him that he use the very best sound for the case. Our English is a rich material, and we as audience should be satisfied with nothing less than the best rhyme and the best alliteration.

Perhaps the most taking of verse-ornaments is the refrain, the repetition. We love it in songs, and lyric poetry abounds in it. The "side by side" certainly keeps our thought from wandering from the theme, and the balancing of the opening sentences of the first and third stanzas is wholly satisfying, "'T was night in Venice."

There is another phase of ornament study in the grammatical construction, which in poetry is closely akin to the development of a theme in music, with its subordinate and intricate phrasings; but this is largely technical, and technique — which delights the connoisseur and pleases the artist — wearies, perhaps, his audience.

*Sculpture in Poetry*

As was suggested in considering action as the province of sculpture, the analysis might become too complex were we to hover long about rhythm, — that loadstone of modern thought, artistic and scientific. Being a little blind, therefore, and overlooking the atoms and all their possibilities of intricate combination, we shall choose to see only the movement of people and great things.

In a lyric, little action is naturally expected; but there is enough here to illustrate the possible province of poetry in the field of sculpture. The "then down to the tide" tells of movements of many pairs of southern folk flocking towards the pleasure-roads of Venice for the accustomed recreation which comes at the end of the day; but we are at once separated from the throng by the skillful concentration on the two who sit "side by side." We are given an interesting figure-piece in the "tall and shadowy gondolier" who "leaned on his oar like a lifted spear." The sculptor's hand

could scarcely achieve so fine a piece because it is lifted above his realm by the shadow of outline, for he can work only in the glow of day with lines definite and distinct.

Our eyes widen in the dusk to catch the forms of the two as they step into the long dark boat and the gondolier takes his place at the oar. One who has watched the fascination of motion of the Venetian gondoliers, catches at once in the rhythm of the verse, just the sweep of the stroke, as the weight of the body is thrown forward, and the long oar swings slowly back.

“ Then oar a-trip  
On the black boat’s keel, then dip and dip ;” —

and we hold our breath just a little as the boat first glides from its landing.

In the next stanza the thought takes us out “ in strong level flight ” into such breadths of horizon and air-space that sculpture is given little to fix in line and form. Still pushing through the narrow canals, a glimpse has come of the sea, and thought floats wide o’er its surface.

In the third stanza we are brought back

to the boat itself, and its especial romance as it glides beneath the Bridge of Sighs, so significant to every lover of history and poetry, and at last, —

“We two are together on the Adrian Sea, —  
The one fair woman of the world to me.”

Then in the last stanza we are made to feel the even roll of the sea, and the climax in action comes as “the one fair woman” instinctively draws near to the protection of which she is evidently sure. The form of the group the poet leaves to his audience, and again we have license to build our castles in Italy, if not in Spain.

### *Painting in Poetry*

As the line and form are intrinsically part of the picture in painting, so they are here, and the strength of the action is heightened and intensified by the coloring.

“’Twas night in Venice.” In that one single sentence there is concentrated every hint of beauty and color from all the innumerable pictures of the Venetian nights with which painters have crowded their portfolios and other people’s walls.



---

Some painter of to-day may look askance even at the most beautiful of these scenes, and say they are worn out, and that Venice has long ago become nothing but a picture. Still the imagination loves these southern nights with their luscious, self-luminous blues. The flood of color from this opening sentence must first fill the whole scene in order to give it any reality. It is the same kind of color in which Shakespeare so beautifully paints the balcony scene of Romeo and Juliet in the lines, "Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face," — that almost over-beautiful night which our careless Juliets so often paint for us in the blackest pigments.

Joaquin Miller gives us the same coloring in another scene near the romantic Lake of Como, when he says —

"— my friend and I; rode down  
By night, where grasses waved in rippled rhyme :  
And so, what theme but love at such a time ?"

But further on in the same poem, where the shadow of night is made to cover the horror of a murderous deed, comes the

impenetrable blackness of midnight, — blacker than any pigment could paint it. The poet does not use the word *night*, but the blackness of the night-thought colors the lines and contrasts forcibly with the “morn” and the “rising sun”: —

“Two men rode silent back toward the lake;  
Two men rode silent down — but only one  
Rode up at morn to meet the rising sun.”

This painting of poetry is a sound-color painting, made by the overtones of the voice. It is as clearly distinguishable, when the ear has learned to listen for it, as are the tone-qualities of different instruments, as the flute or violin, the piano, harp, or horn. It is by their characteristic tone-qualities — the overtones peculiar to each — that we can tell a harp from a horn when they are playing precisely the same melody in the same key. It is by their tone-colors that we can tell one violin from another; that we select one piano as good in tone and reject another as poor. It is by their tone-colors that we can tell a bass voice from a tenor, a soprano from a contralto. It

is largely by tone-color that we recognize the voices of our friends. So it is by an artistic use of the overtones in the speaking or singing voice that the reader can color a poem; he can paint the scenes even as a painter colors his sketch. Sometimes the poet will give a single word which indicates the color of the whole scene; sometimes the thought is only suggested, and we must make "the ear an eye."

To return to the Venetian night scene. First we see the "tall and shadowy gondolier;" just back of him is his dark boat and the uncertain shimmer of the tide. This must all have been hemmed in by the overshadowing walls, for the whole scene is uncertain in outline, save the somewhat heroic figure of the gondolier himself. It half seems like a bit of "the picturesque" by F. Hopkinson Smith, — one of those charming effects which does not stereotype the scene, but shows at a glance that it is but the impression of a moment, and that in another instant the picture will change, as it does now, for the gondolier pushes off from the landing,

and his long graceful boat swings out into the canal.

In the second stanza the coloring is as fine as that ever attempted by painter. In fact, a painter would be almost overbold to attempt such a scene. There are many beautiful achievements of nature which no man has ventured to reproduce. The line —

“The sea it was level as seas of light,”

haunts the lover of the sea, for it paints a well-known water effect with wonderful truth. Sound is a more subtle exponent than paint; and while in a picture the impression would be painted with its possible imperfections, in sound the imagination is left absolutely free to picture it in all perfection.

In the next scene there is the sky to complete the sea, — the “star-sown sky.” All the beautiful color which hung just over the sea is now crowned by the brilliancy of the sky, with its dots of light, — which in the clear night seem almost too large, — and the depth of the blue vastness of the air, filling all space. It is

a scene in which we can breathe, and this is the test of truth which must be put to all pictures.

We cannot hope to see much of faces in this evening light; even though a face be upturned with joy, there is but one for whom it is upturned, and he, with a man's true feeling, does not speak of it. But we are given an idea of beauty which long lingers with us. We think of the pre-Raphaelite painters and their beautiful women with wonderful hair. We think of the lines in Browning's "Gold Hair":—

" Hair, such a wonder of flax and floss,  
Freshness and fragrance — floods of it, too!  
Gold, did I say? nay, gold's mere dross :"

and Rossetti as he sang, —

" The hair that lay along her back  
Was yellow like ripe corn,"

and the woman grows real to us as we see, —

" there fell  
Such golden folds of abundant hair  
Down over my shoulder, as we sat there."

It is not expected that these few color suggestions will be at all satisfactory.

Until one has learned to see color in written words, as a musician hears music in printed notes, he is like one who attempts to read a Greek book, not knowing Greek. If this is true of color in poetry, it is doubly true of music in poetry. Still one can come to hear music in written verse also, just as a musician hears a symphony in the written score. The old Arabian saw could here be reversed to read,— That is the best description which makes the *eye* an *ear*.

*Music in Poetry*

To appreciate the music of a lyric poem, we must hear it as we would hear a song, or even a song without words.

Notice the difference in structure between this lyric, "In a Gondola," and Mendelssohn's "Venetian Gondolier Song," op. 16, no. 6, in his *Lieder ohne Worte*. Mendelssohn makes the gondolier prominent. It is he who sings, and though the romance is in his song, still we never forget the singer. The boat glides on, the waters run smoothly, other boats pass, and the warning call is given. We drift



---

quietly by highly walled banks, winding through the narrow canals, until at some turn a burst of music floods the whole, and we come suddenly upon an open festive square, to leave it again as suddenly. We pass beyond, and the gondolier and his boat slip quietly away, until we hear only the ripple of the water, and now and then his far-away call, and we catch faintly the tolling of some great bell striking the hour. This is often music's way of singing; but our poet sings more as a voice alone, without accompaniment.


In musical structure there must always be a theme, a motif. We have found the theme of the poem already architecturally in the refrain, "side by side." Each time the refrain is repeated in music, it gains in meaning through the further development of the harmony and phrasing. So, in this lyric, each time the refrain "side by side" comes to us, it is freighted with new meaning, it bears a new burden, until at the climax, as is often the case in music, when the theme itself has been developed to the height of its possibility, the author gives us for




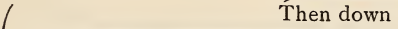
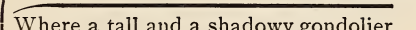
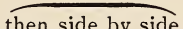
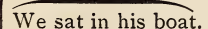
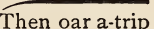

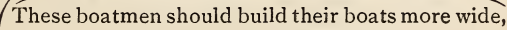
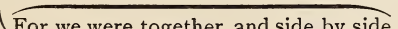
climax, not the refrain itself, but its antithesis, in such a way as to present the real meaning of the theme, but in a stronger sense. At the end of the lyric, instead of the closeness of the "side by side," we have the suggestion of great width in "wider for lovers," which "wider" suggests the separation which the "lovers" denies.

So much for the formal structure of the poem; the details, as in the case of a musical composition, are to be found in the phrasing; and it is just at this point that the interpreters of poetry, but more especially of dramatic poetry, are particularly weak. Emotion gives color to tone, but it is intellect alone which gives the phrasing. The infinite number of interesting things which can be said of a musician's phrasing can be said as well and as significantly of a poet's. In music there is the conscientiousness of Bach, the freedom of Beethoven, the daring of Wagner; and in poetry there is the conscientiousness of Spenser, the freedom of Shakespeare, the daring of Browning.

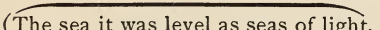
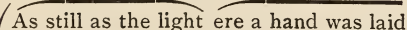
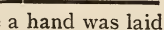
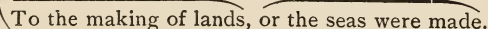
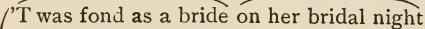
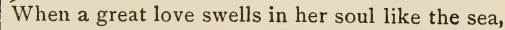
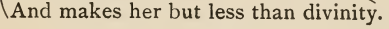
To illustrate: follow this poem through

very broadly as to its phrasing. The verses will be separated into the larger phrases, numbered, and the important ones marked with an \*; the smaller, subordinate ones will be marked in loops  as one marks phrases in music.

## I

- \* 1 ( 'T was night in Venice.  Then down to the tide,
- 2 (  Where a tall and a shadowy gondolier  
 Leaned on his oar, like a lifted spear: —
- \* 3 ( 'T was night in Venice;  then side by side
- 4 (  We sat in his boat.  Then oar a-trip  
 On the black boat's keel, then dip and dip; —
- \* 5 (  These boatmen should build their boats more wide,  
 For we were together, and side by side.

## II

- \* 1 (  The sea it was level as seas of light,
- 2 (  As still as the light  ere a hand was laid  
 To the making of lands, or the seas were made.
- 3 (  'T was fond as a bride on her bridal night  
 When a great love swells in her soul like the sea,  
 And makes her but less than divinity.

- \* 4 ('T was night, —  
 \* 5 ( The soul of the day, I wis :  
 \* 6 ( A woman's face hiding from her first kiss.

## III

- 1 ('T was night in Venice.  
 \* 2 ( On o'er the tide —  
 \* 3 ( These boats they are narrow as they can be,  
 These crafts they are narrow enough,  
 4 ( and we,  
 To balance the boat, sat side by side —  
 \* 5 ( Out under the arch of the Bridge of Sighs,  
 On under the arch of the star-sown skies :  
 6 ( We two were together on the Adrian Sea, —  
 \* 7 ( The one fair woman of the world to me.

## IV

- 1 ( These narrow-built boats, they rock when at sea,  
 And they make one afraid  
 2 ( So she leaned to me ;  
 And that is the reason alone there fell  
 \* 3 ( Such golden folds of abundant hair  
 Down over my shoulder, as we sat there.  
 \* 4 ( These boatmen should build their boats more wide,  
 \* 5 ( Wider for lovers ;  
 \* 6 ( as wide —  
 \* 7 ( Ah, well !  
 \* 8 ( But who is the rascal to kiss, and tell ?

---

The opening phrase, "'Twas night in Venice," attracts the ear at once. The description which follows serves only to loop the thought over to the restatement of "'Twas night," etc.; "then side by side" and the next two lines loop over to the last two lines, which are stated positively, "These boatmen," etc. The prominence of thought makes the distinction between these five large phrases and the subordinate ones.

The second stanza is a large and passion-pure variation. The phrasing follows very much that of the first stanza. The principal phrases are in the first, fourth, and last two lines, only the prominence given to these is not nearly so intense as in the first stanza; for the whole, we must remember, diverges from our theme. The last line suggests the end of the fourth stanza, which is a very clever thing to attempt.

In the third stanza the handling of the phrases is almost the reverse of that in the first stanza. It is the loops between the first, fourth, and last two lines which gain the ascendancy, until the last line

brings in a new motif in "The one fair," etc.

The last stanza takes up the phrase-statements more evenly; the first, second, and third lines growing toward a *crescendo* in the fourth and fifth, coming back to the phrasing of the first line in "These boatmen should build their boats more wide." In next to the last line, as we observed before, the antithesis of the original theme is stated boldly, and then — with a cleverness rivalled by few musicians, and seldom so attempted by them — the poet turns the whole tide of the expectant phrase, and throws the burden of the ending upon his audience.

If phrasing were purely mechanical, a knowledge of grammar would suffice us; but it being artistic as well, we need to know something of musical structure to appreciate it in its fullest meaning.

So far we have taken up musical form only. To touch upon the rhythm would involve us in technicalities, and melody — which is the individualizing element of music — must be heard to be understood. The rhythm in the flow of this little song

---

can be easily felt, and we may be sure, with such beauty of scene, there must be exquisite melody as well. Our ears are seldom slow in making us aware of melody, — all the world loves a tune; but our eyes are very apt to forget, that in this, they play only a subordinate part. The child's story of the quarrelling of the senses has still some meaning for us.





## THE LANGUAGE OF TONE

---

THE Language of Tone is so subtle, so insinuating, so evanescent, that only a master can hold it fast. It slips from our grasp. It evades, it eludes us, and we follow, as after a dream fantasy. Nevertheless, music is an art, and, being an art, one can catch the outline of its form, and hold this at least captive. Beyond this in every art, to understand fully, one must have the art-instinct, the æsthetic faculty. It is form, however, which gives us a reason for our listening, and audiences need ask no more.

Music, unlike speech, is simple in that it has a simple scale for its utterance. Great artists are well aware of the marvelous effect of lifting a note a trifle above pitch, or lowering it a little, to

intensify the significance of its meaning; but still, as a formal language, music holds strictly to the scale. Twelve half-tones, with the octaves above and below, formed at will into a major or minor scale, furnish music with the material for all her compositions. This seems delightfully simple, but like the simplicity of the *prismatic colors* in painting, out of it grows a world of complexity, and the works of the master tone-builders are found to be fearfully and wonderfully made.

Musical phrases bear an exact relation to the grammatical phrases in word language with which every one ought to be familiar. Out of the simple musical phrases, put together to form music-sentences and paragraphs, is built the whole musical structure; so in this there is a good basis for beginning, whether we "know notes" — as the old farmer said — or not.

Do not anticipate anything like an exhaustive analysis of the form of musical compositions. All that is interesting to know here, is that composers use the different forms of musical compositions

for exactly the same reason that writers use histories, biographies, poems, novels, or essays, in which to speak out their thoughts and to advance their ideas to their fellows. One may expect, therefore, to find wide differences between the musical intention of songs, sonatas, oratorios, symphonies, operas, dances, and études. The composer, as well as the writer, must be trusted to use the form best suited to his especial purpose. Each form is greater or less only in degree; all may be great.

It is frequent that artists working in different materials are trying to say very much the same things. There are not very many things to be said, after all; that is, not many of paramount importance to humankind. It is man who is manifest, and we dare none of us claim ignorance of man, whether we hope to learn more of him through the arts, or whether we ignore the arts completely.

No artist can doubt that Sidney Lanier, in his poem "The Symphony," has reached the same high plane which Beethoven found in his Ninth Symphony, or which Saint

Paul proclaimed when he said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, . . . I am nothing!" Such great heights are not often reached; but there are many intermediate ones between what man is and what man might be, which artists of all kinds have tried to make clear. To express the thought and feeling of man, — this is art's whole aim.

It is undisciplined emotion which kills artists and hinders art, and it is this in art which an audience should learn to know and condemn. All music is not good music, any more than all poetry is good poetry, or all painting good painting. There are some paintings — alack! one must needs say many paintings — which are as debasing as vice itself. Can it be expected that poetry and music, being more ethereal, are altogether free from taint? Painting being a more material art, its grossness is more apparent; but it is also apparent in degree in the other arts. Yes; and in the higher arts, as they touch so intimately and keenly man's innermost susceptibilities

and mainsprings of motive, the danger is terribly insidious.

The nature of vibration in sound allies it very closely to human emotion itself, and human emotion has a degrading as well as an elevating tendency. Human feeling, like musical sound, has its *crescendos* and *diminuendos*, its *accelerandos* and *retardandos*, its *forte* and *forzando*, its *piano* and *pianissimo*, its *andante*, *allegretto*, *allegro*, and *vivace*, its *presto* and its *adagio*, its sustained heights of emotion, like *sostenuto tranquillo*, its *furioso* movements and its *morendos*.

No one can doubt that the tremendous hold which music has upon all sorts and conditions of people, lies in its close kinship with the emotional life of mankind. Schumann struggled hugely, and wrote for us themes which are really emotions from his soul of souls. Wagner strove to pierce further, and, instead of making the expression individual, made it universal, in choosing some deeply human myth through which earlier minds had tried to express the abstract. His Musical-Dramas deal with more than single char-

acters; they treat of universal types. They embody feelings common to all peoples. Beethoven! Somehow it is hard to think that he too struggled for utterance. His music, even in its depths of intensity, never runs riot. It has a classic touch which easily owns him master. But when we look into his deep-set eyes, — as his face is left for us, — we know that he too struggled long “to arrive.”

The music of different times and nations depends upon the resources of their musical instruments, or the statement might with equal right be reversed, for the development of the musical art in a nation determines the character of their musical instruments. The Hindus, the Cinghalese and Japanese, have some instruments of beautiful tone, and the Turks and Arabs some atrocious ones; but their music has a less definite scale than ours, less conventionalized. To western ears, however, their music partakes more strongly of inflection than of musical notes, and more of noise than of distinctly musical sound; and when the human instrument



is considered, — as in singing, — their nasal tones, and often shrieks, are not altogether to the taste of western ears, although the natives hasten to assure us that all are beautiful, that our orchestra and band music is much “too big,” our “fiddle too small,” and our “singing — Bah!”

In considering the instruments peculiar to our own orchestra, it will be found, that since the time of Haydn, each instrument has grown to have its especial interpretative power. If one hears much orchestra-music, in following the development of a theme, he can tell very nearly just when the flute-notes will be needed, when the brass and strings, when the clarionet or drums, — as one can read ahead in a book or poem, or a play. It is out of this study of the characteristic expressional values of the different instruments that our great symphonies have been developed. There is nothing that gives one so clear an idea of the range of expression of the chief orchestral instruments as that poem of Sidney Lanier's mentioned before, “The Symphony.” Who but him-



self, great flutist and able violinist that he was, would have dared to put such feelings into words? Musicians always shrink from so doing. They seldom care to say anything to the uninitiated. It is always, "Let them learn music, and they too will understand as we do,—if there be any understanding in them."

Single instruments all have received attention, each has had its great masters, yet there are possibilities for each which have not yet been guessed. Paganini startled the world. Yet much that was new and strangely difficult to his audiences of the first days of this century has become the common property of every good violinist to-day. Undoubtedly there is still ample opportunity for special development.

Beethoven used wisely and wonderfully all the instruments at his command; but he realized that there was one greater instrument than all. He essayed to use this human instrument too, in his opera, "Fidelio;" but with greater triumph, however, in his Choral Symphony he brings in the human voices to crown the whole. Schiller's "Hymn to Joy" has gained

the noblest setting which hymn has ever known in the grand finale to this Ninth Symphony.

Wagner followed in the path which Beethoven had thus pioneered, but more boldly; he used the voices as other musicians had used an orchestra. Beethoven's Grand Chorale gives the singers plenty of hard work, but Wagner's demand upon them is enormous. He works his orchestra nearly to death, and his singers hardly less. We may enjoy this or not. It all depends on our point of view.

There are three ways in which music appeals to men: through its rhythm, its melody, and its harmony. Those who have been fortunate enough to hear Strauss's Vienna Orchestra can appreciate rhythm almost in its perfection. The peculiar sympathy between the leader and the players gives us the dance-measure in the full swing of the fascination of motion. This is the most physical appeal of music; it is its most elementary appeal. This rhythm is the foundation of the dance-measure, out of the development of which all our modern music has

grown. Our symphony itself boasts no higher origin, but it has grown through this development into something infinitely greater than the primitive rhythm of the dance, and only at times recognizable as akin to it.

Harmony is the intellectual development of music. It is the mind of music, as rhythm is the body, and melody the soul. Harmony is the scientific foundation of music. It is the wise, reasonable part; and he who thinks that music is a mere thing of sensuous appeal or pleasurable emotional excitement, knows nothing of its mental possibilities. Great minds have wrestled with fugue and counterpoint. There remains as much and more to be done, for the variety in combination is nothing short of infinite. Strongly intellectual natures find much reasonable logic in the harmonic progressions and developments of musical themes. These can be followed well in Bach's music, for, in the naïve simplicity of his intellect, he allows us to watch these processes of his intellectualization perhaps clearer than any other composer.

Any musician, however, can build a harmony, but it takes a genius to create a melody. We look to melody for the peculiar characteristics of music. Melody gives individuality, distinction. That it is through melody that music has its greatest hold on mankind, is made plain by the universality of folk-song, although in these, the rhythm, it is true, plays also an important part. Rising in the scale of civilization, we find, in the lowest, less of melody than of rhythm; but higher, the melody grows in importance as it does in power.

There is more too in the combination of words and music than the world has been aware of until within the last part of our century. There is a subtle relation between not only the sentiment expressed, but even the very vowels and consonants of the words, and the notes of the scale. In no other way can we account for the immense power which certain simple songs have over all nations. Take our much abused and caricatured "Annie Laurie." In spite of grind-organ degeneracy and impious treatment, when well

sung it has a power over all English speaking people which no elaborate operatic aria could ever have. Bayard Taylor knew well the enormous power of the ballad, as he shows in his "Song of the Camp," that masterful glimpse of the Crimean War.

Wagner realized this correspondence of sentiment, vowel, and note so forcibly that he was obliged to write his own poems for his operas, for which all lovers of German song are ever grateful. In melody too, or more properly formal tunes as our ears have come to know them, his works are abundant; but he is so lavish in giving us half a dozen tunes at a time, that it takes some nicety of tone-training for our ears to distinguish and follow them. If we have not in some degree learned to do this, there is little wonder if much that he has written seems to us mere noise, as one so often hears it called.

Just a few words about our modern songs and sketch-books. Musicians too, with poets and painters, have caught the modern spirit of impressionism. Grieg gives us little glimpses of nature which

are very modern in touch. We catch the darting movement of a butterfly as the sun glances from its wings. We see it sail softly among the shadows, floating afar, fluttering near, then darting off in an unexpected way, as butterflies are wont to do. Nevins gives us water-scenes, quiet as thought, with huge dragon-flies — rainbows of light — hovering lazily over the surface, or purling, gurgling streams and flower-lined banks with some perfect little god of a narcissus flower leaning alongside.

This too is heresy in art, as the old Meissonnier-like musicians tell us. Shall we trust the critics, or our own impressions? Impressionism is so new a thing in art that as yet its devotees are only students. A few names stand out boldly in painting; but only the enthusiasts call them masters. They are still only striving toward something which they catch but dimly. The greatest success of this school has been achieved in poetry. Modern *vers-de-société* in a distinctly human way shows an abundance of impressionistic studies, and we feel in poets

like Dobson that the form of the impression has attained more of completeness than we find in painting and music. It is quite possible, however, that the very conventionality of this form, as it is due largely to its French origin, proves a stumbling-block to any impartial criticism. Time will prove.

We are greatly hopeful for English songs. Singers have been slow to give their audiences an opportunity to know of the beauty of pure English. Presumably it has been too difficult for them, and they have used the laziest language lying easily at hand, which accounts for the superabundance of florid music with Italian words skipping along here and there, just for conventionality's sake. "Songs must have some words, you know!" the Italian song-writers admit, and string a lot of insipidities together, which the singer usually does not understand, and the audience is not given a chance to understand even if they could, while in all probability they could not, and would be worse off if they could. A conglomeration of Tra-la-la, Tre-le-le, Troo-loo-loo, would be as



efficacious as far as making us any the wiser for words. And what is worse than all, the singers are audacious enough to tell us that the words are of no account whatever. "It is the beautiful *tone* which makes the music." If so, pray whistle to us, good singers. It will be quite as acceptable to us, commonplace audiences that we are.

In confidence, just to the audience: Did you ever know a singer who spoke beautiful English or any other language, and spoke it purely, truly, and intelligently, who ignored the words of a song? Is it not rather those who speak their mother tongue slovenly and indecently, (a practice which our ears have by constant habit grown so to pardon in conversation), who fear the prominence of words in song? There, where language is accented, and every word is distinct, prominent, and "long drawn out," mistakes and impurities of language are so glaringly emphasized that even the much-enduring, much-forgiving ears of the patient audience cannot pass over the errors.

Still, it is usually the case that these same word-scorning singers sing their much-adored Italian as abominably as they would sing our good English. It takes brains as well as lungs and a pharynx to sing words; and if these were not so often woefully lacking, we would to-day have more song-artists and fewer men and women with larynxes that have been trained to perform a few vocal feats. As audience we shall hope that the wide-felt want of broader education for all artists, will give us, among other blessings, some singers who will interpret for us in all its purity and beauty our own excellent English.

## MUSIC

---

HERE is a little Cradle Song by Grieg. It is simple; but here is the simplicity of the master and not the simpleness of the simpleton. It takes a master to interpret its full meaning, just as it takes a Bernhardt to read "The Last Rose of Summer," a Patti to sing it, or a Paderewski to play some tiny minuet.

Let us follow it through first for the technique, — the method of its making, — then for its expression, — the end and aim of its making. It is published as the first number in Grieg's Second Book of Lyric Pieces, and arranged originally for the piano as printed here.

In form it phrases itself into three groups like the stanzas in verse, though the expression marks show only two

## 1. Berceuse.

Allegretto tranquillo.  $\text{♩} = 92$  Edvard Grieg, Op. 88.

PIANO. *p*

*rit.* *una corda ppp* *a tempo* *morendo*

Con moto.

First system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. Bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamic marking: *p tre corde*.

Second system of musical notation. Treble staff continues the melodic line. Bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamic marking: *p*. Tempo marking: *a tempo*. Performance markings: *rit.* (ritardando) and *rit.* (ritardando).

Third system of musical notation. Treble staff continues the melodic line. Bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamic marking: *p*. Tempo marking: *a tempo*. Performance markings: *ritard.* (ritardando) and *rit.* (ritardando).

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble staff continues the melodic line. Bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamic marking: *pp tre corde*. Tempo marking: *a tempo*. Performance markings: *rit.* (ritardando) and *rit.* (ritardando).

Fifth system of musical notation. Treble staff continues the melodic line. Bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamic marking: *pp tre corde*. Tempo marking: *a tempo*. Performance markings: *rit.* (ritardando) and *rit.* (ritardando).

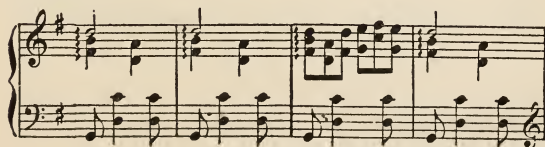
The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. Each system has a treble and bass staff. The first system is in B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. The second system includes the markings 'dim.' and 'ritard. molto'. The third system is marked 'a tempo' and 'p'. The fourth system is marked 'pp'. The fifth system is marked 'morendo' and 'ppp'. The score features various musical notations including chords, arpeggios, and melodic lines. There are also some decorative symbols (circles with dots) below the bass staff in each system.

— the first marked *Allegretto tranquillo* (page 162), and the second, as the key changes, *Con moto* (page 163); but as the key changes and the first tempo is resumed, *a tempo* (middle of page 164), we find the third phrase group. In the first division (page 162) are four phrases of four bars each, marked *p*, to be played softly and then repeated very, very softly, *ppp*, until the song seems to die away. Of these four phrases, the second repeats the first, — a little higher and in another, the dominant, key, —

1st Phrase    (1)                    (2)                    (3)                    (4)



2d Phrase



and the third further emphasizes it by repeating it an octave above the first, with



the addition of a few notes to give a little variety in the harmony.

3d Phrase




The fourth phrase in its first bar (1) repeats the same interval that has been emphasized before, but with an added harmony. The next bars (2, 3, 4) change the intervals, and in a harmonic progression lead up to the second octave above the opening note in the first phrase, only



to drop again in closing (4), — thus striking the keynote in three octaves with the tonic chord, which ends the movement, the repetition being a mere echo, fainting in the distance.

See on how slight a theme a composer builds a composition. Written in the key of *G*, the song opens on the keynote, and

 falls to the fourth below. This gives the character of the whole melody. It is repeated in the



second bar (2) of the first phrase, varied in rhythm and melody, by splitting it into thirds in the third bar (3), and repeated in the fourth (4), as first stated. Here is the simplicity of melody and monotony of rhythm, which with the syncopated base gives the rocking of the cradle, — the accompaniment of the mother's lullaby.

These same four phrases, based on this melody, form the third part (page 164), which ends the song. The second part (page 163), in a different key, with a different rhythm and melody, states a very different thought. The measured first

eight bars are marked in eight short phrases, which are repeated in the next eight bars;

and then an ascending chord breaks in



and gives the keynote for the repetition of the mother's song in a different key, which after its four phrases  ends with eight short phrases very abrupt and broken, a startled cry, which subsides and dies away to the *d* note,  dominant of the original key, which now comes in again as the first melody is repeated (*a tempo* page 164), and ends the song.

All this sounds rather stupid and technical, but it is only by taking things to pieces that one can find out how they are made, and of what. Now that we come to the expression of the song, the beauty of the phrasing will be clearer and more interesting.

Music gives us the atmosphere in which thoughts and feelings are born and live. In any music which does not join itself to words, which are the conventionalized and organic symbols of thought, we must expect to find more of feeling and impressions of thought than of distinct and limited thoughts, as we would have in a word sentence. Just such an impression would be given by a painting where the

atmosphere was truly shown. But, unlike painting or poetry, where under a glorious sunset the artist can in fine scorn paint the sorrows of man or his sins, in music, when the clouds lower, so do the spirits of men, and when the sun bursts forth in his radiance, the joy of man's heart is full too. There is never in music, — *i. e.*, in simple music without words, — that irony of fate, that sarcasm of nature, which glories in itself and ignores the sorrows and joys of mankind. Where many instruments concur in making up a great composition, as in orchestral music, very complex and opposite feelings and thoughts can be expressed; but the atmosphere gives always the *raison d'être* for the theme. No o'erclouded mood lasts long under music's open sky, for the sun penetrates all darkness.

Here, without the title, Berceuse, the melody has a certain simplicity and monotonous tenderness, and the rhythm a characteristic rocking which gives us an unmistakable cradle-song. It opens very smoothly, tranquilly, and softly, with just enough action for accompaniment to keep

the rocking of the cradle prominent. It is the Norwegian mother song as she sings her little one to sleep, sewing perhaps as she rocks the cradle steadily, and sings some simple folk tune. The cradle swings to and fro monotonously, following the melody of the song, growing slower as it ends. Then her voice takes up the song again, this time almost under her breath, repeating drowsily the same tiny air. The cradle rocks slower and slower, the song dies away, and at last both cradle and song are still, and the baby sleeps.

Now comes the dream. The key changes, the *con moto* movement begins. It is a tiny dream, a baby's dream, dream of an Erl-king perhaps, as the measured time rides on with well-marked tread toward a *crescendo* and dies away on the sustained tone (*d*), just as a child's breathing rests for an instant; then the dream measure begins again in a higher key, very pathetic, beginning minor as before, but ending in the major on the sustained third (*d'* and *f*). Then begins a little tremor running up from the bass on the minor arpeggio of *c*#, a little trembling

shiver which ends quietly on *e* just as an echo of the mother's song runs through the baby's sleep, recalled in a different key and with the melody a little reversed. This is most beautifully handled, very effective as it increases to a bold *forte*, a child's waking cry as it startles from some troubled dream. Then, as the mother's hand lovingly swings the cradle again, the sobs die out and the mother's song begins anew, — to and fro, rocking and singing, so sweet, so soothing, so tender, — slower, and slower, and slower, till the baby sleeps safely at last.

See how marked the rocking phrase is, with the little stress, as the force of the mother's foot or hand pushes the cradle from her, and it swings back smoothly of its own weight. It needs a master's touch, steady and true, to mark the little swinging character of this phrase, — always the same whether *forte* or *pianissimo*. Note how artistically and truly the expression-marks are used. The song at first is very steady, very quiet and soothing, monotonous, just as loud at ending as at beginning; then the wonderfully



soft repetition, under the breath, as the mother just notices that the wee one is fast travelling to dreamland, and the beautiful *diminuendo* and *retardo* as the cradle slowly suspends its swinging and the child sleeps.

Note the suppressed passion of the weird dream, a dream of strange things. A half-remembered echo flits through the tiny brain, of some folk-tale the mother has told; then the remembrance of the mother song so dear to the child-heart mixes with the dream-tale, which repeats itself, gathering in excited terror, until it wakens the child. The little one starts with a cry as the music swells to a *forte* (*f*), then the sobs die out as the cradle swings again. Here to interpret truly, the master hand must move the keys. What tyro could make the simple notes pure enough in tone, in gradually declining rhythm, in soothing tenderness, to express the composer's intent, — very simple, very true to life, — altogether exquisite.

Finally, the little *crescendo* lends interest to the folk-tune and emphasizes the



---

steady, drowsy *morendo* of the sleep-going child.

It is a slight bit of music, this Berceuse, fit for a single instrument alone. Larger thoughts demand larger settings, complex themes need complex color-schemes and use a whole orchestra of instruments; but the whole orchestra can do no more than touch the heart and the brain, and this slight song does as much.

## THE MUSICAL-DRAMA

---

A LITTLE definite glimpse has been given now of each of the arts, with but a few slight suggestions of what each art-language can say to those who look and listen. Each language is powerful. Each has its especial power, each its limitations. Less has been said of limitations than of possibilities, for there are always plenty of connoisseurs ready to say to each art and to each art-work the "Thus far shalt thou go, no farther!" This can be left with the connoisseurs. It is safe enough with them.

The power of each art has been shown, though one scarcely dares to say that one art is greater, one less. All have one end, — to appeal to man, — man, the living, thinking, loving being; and as they do

---

this truly, as they do this nobly, each is equally strong with the strength of a pure purpose. Still it has been seen, as the arts have progressed, that their expression has grown more nearly one with the spontaneous thought and feeling of man. All art is great as it wastes or spends naught of the power of the artistic conception in getting that conception into definite form, — that is, as its expression becomes direct and spontaneous.

Wagner, the great wonder-worker of our time, the culmination of all art-effort, all art-thought, all art-feeling, — Wagner, that man profound and primitive in his grasp of man and his nature and life, saw that each art had worn for itself a channel-bed from whence its stream flowed into the great river of life. But he, in some moment of high thought, grasped at a purpose which burned through his whole life until he was on fire to do the wonderful thing which he had seen was possible. With great ingenuity, great mental grasp, great emotional strength, he carved out a broader channel in the midst of these winding streams of art;

until the streams themselves, hearing and watching the master at work, became impregnated with the master's purpose, and poetry and music mingled their waters with a great leap of joy. Form, line, action, and color added their bounty, and the one great channel of art mingled with the River of Life until no man could tell where art ended and life began, for his art was very life itself. And he gave us his "Parsifal."

This great co-ordination of the arts, finished in detail, subtle in conception, heroic in manifestation, makes the "intensest" demand upon all its artist interpreters made by any of the single arts. In the production of Wagner's great Musical-Dramas, no one can realize the tremendousness of the composer's demand who has not heard from himself the story of his life and of his work. Ten good volumes tell us in his own words of his struggles, but his Musical-Dramas alone can adequately tell of his attainment.

No attempt will be made to enter into an analysis of one of his works, nor to give an analysis of his purposes in detail;

but just a few of his theories will show in contrast the difference between this artwork, where all the arts are intimately joined, and poetry, that inclusive art, in whose being all arts are organic parts and fibres. This last has been suggested briefly in the chapter on "Word Language;" the first will be stated as briefly for purpose of comparison.

To begin with music, the crowning art. Wagner early in his life discovered that when music was joined to words it gained a power which, even when the words were scant and scarcely fit, the music indifferent and interpreted only half-well, was still unique, peculiar to itself, and stronger than music pure and simple; but when, as occasionally happened, good music was joined to good poetry or poor music joined to poor poetry, but interpreted by an artist, the effect was stupendous, as was shown by the repeated triumphs of the singer Schröder-Devrient.

Wagner followed out this thought to its foundation. He realized that the effect which this joining of poetry and music produced was something entirely new,

and quite apart from the effect produced by any one of the arts singly. Taking Beethoven as the height of achievement in music, and Shakespeare as the height of achievement in the drama (poetry), he thought to realize his conception of what the Musical-Drama might become by incorporating into the drama the full power which Beethoven had given to German music.

The masterpieces of Beethoven — his symphonies, for example — show a conventionalized structure in their composition, to which Beethoven has given nevertheless marvelous vitality, and even life itself through the wonder of his melody. Still were the form freer, were melody for instance completely loosed from this conventionalized symphonic form and incorporated into the life-like and masterfully dramatic conceptions of a Shakespeare, this very melody would rise to a greater power than it had ever before attained.

The foolish and ignorant charge of "lack of melody" is so often put to Wagner's work, that to gain a true conception of what he has done in art, one must under-

---

stand melody as he conceived it. The history of music from the very earliest time is merely the history of the development of melody, which is music itself, that is, it is the *form* in which music is manifest. In articulated speech man embodies his thoughts; but it is in tone that he expresses his feelings, the whole gamut of his emotions. Now, this tone must gain for itself some *form* if it is to grow organically into an art-language, and this form we name *melody*.

In Italy the need of melody caused the development of the lyric drama into the opera. Italian opera serves well for comparison, not only because Wagner's work is avowedly opposed to it, but because it has come to be considered by the unlearned in musical matters as the embodiment of melody. This Italian opera grew out of an imitation of the Greek tragedy, with its "choral song and the dramatic recitation which periodically rose into musical measure." As the recitation was obliged to carry the whole burden of the drama, the dramatic action, the story, it grew monotonous to the Italians, and thus



the "air" was developed, the *tune*, which grew into the *aria* of Italian opera as we have it sung to-day.

Schumann says: "One must hear Italian music among the Italians, German music may be enjoyed under any heaven."

In Italian opera these *arias* grew to be the principal part of the opera, and they were strung together by a succession of meaningless chords, which were no music at all. So, the greater part of the opera grew to be a meaningless, though unobtrusive, background of mere noise, to which there was no form and so absolutely no melody. The consequence was that when the *aria* appeared with its *tune*, the opera audience of the drowsy, sunny southland awoke from its stupor, or ceased its gossiping and small-talk, to hear the melody, which, in its undistracting, unobtrusive setting, shone forth a rare jewel, that, had it been mixed in a handful of jewels, might not have appeared so bright.

Italian opera, in its degradation, became no more than a book with words jumbled haphazard over the page, with here and

there scattered through the leaves a charming bit of verse where the words were formed into sensible sentences, and in whose cadence the ear could catch some meaning, slight though it might be; while Wagner's Musical-Drama is a book that must be read through, word for word, sentence for sentence, page for page. Italian opera has its few melodies, well-set and prominent. Wagner's Musical-Drama is one large melody. Wagner conceived his whole drama as *an entire* melody, the smaller divisions of which were organic parts of a complete whole, the individual character motifs or themes of which were reasonable and logical, and withal intensely attuned to the feeling itself.

Melody is the simple, direct embodiment of a man's inner nature in tone. Harmony is an artificial form of arranging sounds which grew up in the history of the development of music. The only form in which our modern ear can grasp melody is the form which has come to us ready-made, and was developed from the rhythm of the dance. It is recognizable

to us only by the repetition of certain definite melodic members in a definite rhythm. This is the melody of which all musical compositions are constructed. Wagner so constructed his Musical-Drama, that the whole production is conceived as one unified melody. This large melody does not consist merely of an aggregation or accumulation of musical themes or motifs, strung together to give the composition a suitable length; but in it we find a complete absorption of many motifs into one great motif, and for this strengthening of the one great motif he used the art of poetry, in its purest conception, and with a peculiarity in its selection of subject, which also needs explanation.

Man's primitive expression is in tone, as we know by the sobs and crooning laugh-tones of the child. This tone, which is open and unobstructed, may be compared with the vocal tone given by certain wind instruments, allied in mechanical structure to the human vocal apparatus. This open tone is expressive of the whole gamut of emotion, but can

---

express no definite thought. It is only when this open tone comes to be enclosed or fenced-in by consonants, which are formed by the closing in different ways of the vocal apparatus, that these open sounds carry any definite meaning to the understanding. The open-toned vowels of speech carry and express, therefore, man's feeling, and in this connection all the separate vowels may be considered as one vowel, the variety and distinction being given to speech by the variety of the consonants which shape these open vowel sounds into organic words.

The consonants are possessed of a different power as they occur at the beginning or end of a vowel, and limit the vowel sound in a different way. It will not be necessary to go further into Wagner's theories developed from the nature of the vowel and the consonant in speech. His use of words in his dramas alone makes the nature of his theories evident. It is essential only to make clear, that, as speech is composed of the open-toned vowel, outlined by the form-shaping consonant, this vowel — being tone — makes

in itself, in its very utterance, a melody which is none other than the same tone and melody from which music itself has been developed. Therefore in the joining of words and music, there is merely the connection of one with the other with a common ground of similarity of being.

It is necessary to consider the essence and form of these two arts of poetry and music, as Wagner conceived them, as ready existing for a possible union. Voltaire said with nice scorn: "What is too silly to be said, one gets it sung." Wagner changed this imputation, and as the type of requirement in a poem put it: "What is not worth the being sung, neither is it worth the poet's pains of telling." In language, as in action, in his dramas he cut away the purely accidental, petty, and indefinite, and left only the purely human core. In frank emotion we try to express ourselves briefly and to the point, and if possible *in one breath*. This it is that gives us the measure for a phrase in verse (poetry) as well as a phrase in tone (music). The breath itself

marks off the number of accents which would naturally fall into one phrase, and also the climax of the phrase. The poem therefore which would join itself with music must present a compact construction. All side words, as in the modern conventional phrase in speech, which do not add to the main word or bear to it a direct and important relationship, should be cut away.

The material which the poet uses for his art (word language) naturally addresses itself to man's understanding. When the poet attempts by the phrasing of these words so to arrange them as to address man's feeling, he places them into a musical bar, distinguished by certain accordings of similar consonants, and joining his vowels with the language of tone, — as they in themselves represent melody, — he is fully equipped to appeal to man's feeling.

The genuine folk-song, as it is handed down to us, presents the fitting union of melody with word and gesture. This folk-song, however indivorcibly we find poetry ingrown with melody, still pre-



sents this union only in a childlike simplicity and a very straitened indigence. Poets of all times have restricted their verses to fill this straitened folk-song form, and so an unnatural union of poetry and music has come about in the great mass of vocal compositions, to the detriment of both arts. In the art-work which Wagner proposed, there should be no restriction of either poetry or music, but a freedom for both beyond any freedom which they could attain in their separate attempts to appeal to the entirety of man's nature or to interpret that nature in its completeness.

Wagner believed that the ideal subject for the poet who would wed his poem to music was the *myth*, that originally nameless poem of the people, that we find in all ages treated in ever new methods by the poets of periods of finished culture. For in it the conventional disappears, and such forms of human relations as are only applicable to the abstract reason vanish almost entirely, and there appears instead only the always intelligible, the purely human,—but in that inimi-



table concrete form which gives to every genuine myth the individual features that are so easily recognizable.

Word-speech, the great language of thought, and tone-speech, the great language of the feeling, joined as a unit and presented to an audience in a living representation through the action and voice of great song-artists, — all this, joined with the intricate mechanism of the painter possible to the modern stage and supported by the orchestra, — forms the most complete art-work of which man is capable.

This *orchestral support*, the peculiar function which Wagner assigned to the orchestra, has caused a great hubbub of disputing voices among people who know nothing whatever of the whole affair, or among individual supporters of some single art, who have no grasp of art's entirety or of its possibilities.

Up to this point, in so far as words in poetry have joined themselves with melody in music, we have presented to us nothing more than has been already suggested in the chapter on *music in speech*, apart from the fact that Wagner demands

a certain degree of attainment, a certain goal for each of the arts, below which he does not consider their union as possible. Whereas in *music in speech*, the interpreting artist — the reader — must compose the melodies to suit the poet's phrases, and in this music is made the servant of poetry, in the Musical-Drama both arts are shown on an equal plane; that is, as man and woman they are both equal on the plane of humanity.

There is absolutely no difference between the voice in song and speech, — the word-speech of poetry, — except the arbitrary difference of longer sustained tones, and the conventionalized scale. And in the art-work we are now considering there is only the difference of the ideal in the mind of the artist and the fact of reality, between the Shakespearian drama and the Musical-Drama which Wagner proposed. But with the introduction of the orchestra a tremendous difference presents itself. The orchestra is the organ through which harmony — the distinct attainment of the whole art of music, as an art — utters itself. Without going into details as to

---

the structure of the orchestra, it will be sufficient to state the plain demand which Wagner makes upon it, and the power which he attributes to it. To the orchestra he assigns the especial task of supporting the dramatic gestures, of interpreting, nay, in a sense, of making them first possible,—through its language bringing to our thorough understanding the “Unspeakable of Gesture.” This “Unspeakable of Gesture” in itself needs explaining to one who has not closely followed Wagner’s theories, or those of kindred thinkers.

In speaking of action in poetry, it was suggested before that it is quite impossible to express one’s self intelligibly and to the fullest extent of his intentions to his fellow beings, without some bodily movement, no matter how slight this action may be, as in a mere movement of the small muscles surrounding the eyes or mouth. In this way gesture supplements speech. The feeling that is quite impossible for us to speak out in words, we can show quite plainly by gesture. Gesture is the language of feeling, as speech is the language of thought. Gesture, in its

rhythmic character, allies itself intimately with music. In fact, the whole glorious art of music owes its rise to the dance-gesture, as the musical-melody, the "absolute music" of the musician, owes its rise to the melody of the word-verse.

Gesture, therefore, as the exponent of feeling, speaks out very plainly what to speech is "unspeakable." It is just this faculty of speaking out the unspeakable which is the whole attainment of our modern instrumental music. Wagner, therefore, demanded that "the strangely potent language of the Orchestra" should be raised "to such a height, that at every instant it should plainly manifest to our feeling the Unspeakable of the Dramatic situation. In the exercise of this function of the Orchestra its Music has no right to call attention to itself or to its harmony, but merely to forbode or shadow forth the mood—the atmosphere in which the dramatic scene is to be enacted." "Music cannot think: but she can materialize thoughts, *i. e.*, she can give forth their emotional-content as no longer merely recollected but made present." "The Cho-

rus of Greek Tragedy has bequeathed to us its emotional significance for the drama in the Modern Orchestra alone."

This great Musical-Drama begins with the pure music of the orchestra, which foreshadows the mood or atmosphere wherein the materialization of the scene is to take place; this mood, as it is to gain in definiteness, must be presented by living beings, speaking in the "Thought Language" of the poet, as dramatic personages, who must speak to us in the tongue which has already aroused expectancy in our emotions; that is, they must speak to us in music. And they must speak definitely, so as to *determine* this same vague emotion already aroused by the orchestra, that is, they must speak to us in the word-verse. The drama must start with possibilities common to our common life and compatible with it, if the artist would procure our human interest; but through the very perfection of the resources at its command, this Musical-Drama can lead us far above the affairs of our everyday life into the realms of The Marvelous.

With such an intricate mass of theories through which to work out its realization, we might fear that this completed artwork would present problems unsolvable to the mass of humankind; but the fact is far otherwise. When we as audience rid ourselves of the thought that music should present merely "a pleasant tinkling to the ear," we find ourselves already with sufficient human equipment to grasp thoroughly the intent of the Musical-Drama.

Wagner's personal demand of this artwork was that, as it was presented to the audience, it should not remind them of its aim or of the method of its outworking; but that its *content* "must instinctively engross us, as a Human Action vindicated 'necessarily' before our feeling." "The endlessly varied detail in it must reveal itself not only to the connoisseur, but to the simplest layman, as soon as he has attained to the requisite mood. It should produce an effect upon his spirits like that which a beautiful forest produces, in a summer evening, upon a lonely wanderer who has just left the town."

The form of this perfected Musical-



Drama is essentially and uniquely one; the motifs or phrases so present themselves, "that they condition each the other, and unfold themselves to a total breadth of utterance wherein the nature of Man, along one decisory chief-line,—*i. e.*, along a line competent to sum in itself Man's total essence,—wherein this nature is displayed to Feeling in the surest and most seizable fashion."

There are points of great interest in Wagner's theories that have not been touched upon. One, his theory with regard to "keys" in music, is especially pertinent, considering the unconventional "key" freedom which we find in composers like Dvořák; but the aim was to present just such points as would best serve to compare this last union of the arts with their more personal union in poetry. Wagner himself calls his artwork the child of a wonderful marriage,—music with poetry. This union of two great arts, bringing as they do all the other arts with them, causes a new work of art different from either, and yet like both.



## CRITICISM

---

THERE is one other art which, though looked for in vain in the catalogue of Fine Arts, is still of supreme importance and of consummate interest to us as audience, and that is the art of criticism. We allow to each artist his especial art. We give up ungrudgingly the whole list of the Fine Arts to the masters of form, of action, of color, of word, and of tone. We acknowledge these supreme in power, gracious in utterance, helpful in hope; but in proportion as we do justice to all artists and all arts, do we claim for ourselves, and as our own especial privilege, inviolate and secure, this precious art of criticism, erratic and undetermined though it has been overlong.

Jealous enough to guard well our prerogatives we ought to be; but also watch-

ful enough not to accumulate them in ignorance, nor to hoard them in prejudice. Not until we have freed ourselves of the accumulation of false and affected criticism which the critics, so acknowledged, have imposed upon us, shall we be able to acquire this art as a personal accomplishment, or have the ability to use it to the end of individual culture or development.

The Fine Arts present to their audiences always just two points of attack, — their technique and their expression. As the audience directs its attention exclusively to one or the other, does it announce the character of its criticism, which, when considered individually, also announces the temperament and personality of the critic.

By long and persistent custom, criticism has come to be considered as chiefly concerning itself with technical affairs, and unfortunately with these only in a depreciatory way. The critic has imposed upon himself as a primary duty to display his own vast knowledge by proclaiming the ignorance of the artist. To pick to

pieces, to find fault, to show up in a bad light, have long been made the channel for the outpouring of personal vanity. Praise for the artist who has the power to make, has been jealously and purposely withheld by the critic who is himself unable to make, which very withholding, though it may serve to announce the just and able judge, serves a second purpose in proclaiming lack of ability and of insight. The very word has become so great a reproach, that there is not one worthy artist who does not hold himself above its thrusts, out of range of its power, and inviolate from its effects. This is the state of affairs which the unrestrained outpouring of ignorant professional criticism, and the meek and unquestioning acceptance of this criticism by all audiences, have brought about.

Now, it is the criticism of his audience which every artist needs for his own development and progress. He may scorn the acknowledged critics, may set at defiance the limitations with which they strive to bridle his power, and announce open warfare to all criticism; but, watch an

---

artist's progress, and you will find that it is by the criticism of his audience that he grows and gains in force and creativeness.

When a singer fails to hold his audience; when an actor falls short of power in his climax (which his audience, by their withheld appreciation and enthusiasm, shows him he has done); when a pianist interests by his fingering and not by the greatness of the theme which he presents; when a painter fails to touch the heart, and falls short of expressing his message, — then he realizes the unquestionable truth of the criticism of his audience, and accepts this as the irrevocable word of fate. Through this he learns, for the audience that sees and hears plays no mean part in instructing the artist in his art. Every artist goes to school to his audience, and from them he learns his own inefficiencies as well as his powers.

It is necessary for the audience, however, in order to gain the power of spontaneous and truthful criticism, to be entirely rid of the tradition of criticism which is everywhere extant about every

kind of art-work. Not that it is a disadvantage to know such tradition; on the contrary, it is distinctly an advantage to be familiar with it, if one has at the same time the personal force to train it for use instead of ostentatiously riding it unbridled before the multitude, allowing himself to be carried here and there with no guidance of his own will.

To return to the distinctions of criticism: we find there are, first, people who concern themselves exclusively with the technique of art; to them, skill of handling, method of treatment, ability to reproduce, to represent, prove the charm of art. To this class belong the connoisseurs, the audience that knows. Then there are those who, to the knowledge of the power of technique in art, add also a knowledge of art's power of expression, and though giving its just due to technical skill, give the higher praise to its power of expression. To this class belong the amateurs, the audience that loves as well as knows. Last, there are those who, unlearned in the differences of workmanship, untutored in art's intellectual

---

phases, bring still acute sensibilities, easily touched, and a capacity for joy, which is at the last the whole end of art.

“Indeed, to know is something, and to prove  
How all this beauty might be enjoyed, is more :  
But knowing naught, to enjoy is something too.”

To the first class of critics, art owes much. They inform its mind; they treasure its traditions; they encourage it to produce; they give it wealth; they present it with many opportunities, and open to it many advantages. Their criticism is always useful, particularly to beginners in art-study. They insist upon perfection of form, perfection of the letter, and so restrain all eccentricities and vagaries. With them criticism is an affair of cold, calm justice. It is scientific, truthful, impersonal, objective. This audience is untouched by the inwardness of the sacrament; for them the outward and visible sign suffices.

To the last class of critics belong the untrained mass of humankind. Their attitude toward art is as their attitude toward life. They like it, because — they like it. They don't know why, but



they like it. They are undisciplined in controlling or guiding their emotions, and their criticism, though spontaneous and personal, is of weight only as the temperament of the individual himself makes him choose by instinct the best or the worst. It is not infrequent, however, that one finds in this audience that simplicity of the human heart which makes it choose always the best. This audience bows down to genius with a worshipfulness which is little short of idolatry. Their enthusiasm, unreasoning as it is, is stimulating to artists and encouraging to art; but it is more helpful to the artist and to art than it is to the audience themselves. They give everything, and receive nothing for themselves, except blind sensation, — surely a poor return for their energy of enthusiasm, though they have no right to expect more.

But there is the audience that knows and that loves; theirs is the criticism that is wise in appreciation, learned in intellect, sensitive to all moods of all artists, alive to all impressions, keen in enjoyment, discriminating in judgment,



---

helpful in applause. This is the audience that cultivates in patient possession the talent of art appreciation, that best talent of all audiences.

Further, there are a few art-attitudes, which, though deserving no place in art criticism, are still over-assertive, and always so much in evidence that they need to be condemned. Of these attitudes there is one superlative in effrontery. It is so commonplace that it would cease to be noticed were it not so annoying to all serious-minded audiences. One hears everywhere: "Oh, I'm not educated up to that!" Absurdity of absurdities! Not the mere statement, not the plain fact of ignorance, but the assumed critical attitude of depreciation which almost invariably accompanies the remark. Who has not felt the rudeness of this thrust in the presence of some masterpiece? Some vain, complaining thing would try to vindicate its own ignorance and numbness. The man would cast a slur who knows not of what he speaks; would throw contempt upon that of which he is ignorant.

Another art-attitude is assumed by the people who persistently assert that they "do not enjoy art." Their mistake is largely just here. Men of what is usually called inartistic temperament, very practical in disposition, would naturally take little interest in a work which could appeal only to the ultra-sensitive temperament which has been by some common mis-consent attributed to all artists. The fact is, there are many artists who are nothing more than students of character, as many another man with purely business pre-occupations professes to be, and one can expect to find in their art-work just the things which would interest their observant but less expressive brother.

There is another art-attitude which is unfortunately prevalent, — the one which waits. It has always the desire to be "backed up by some one in authority." This attitude has an abundant excuse, for we have indeed "been connoisseured out of our senses, browbeaten out of all reliance on our own judgment." Various art-attempts are thrust rudely before many

---

audiences, and these, in surprise or timidity, meekly regulate their ideas in regard to these attempts according to what they have heard the connoisseurs declare for or against. It is astonishing to find how shy many persons are in expressing themselves about a painting or a play, until they have the assurance and supreme satisfaction of finding out what the morning paper has to say about it. With due respect to the morning paper, — when it happens to be good, as it does sometimes, — it would certainly seem that persons of culture, who had been accustomed to seeing works of art all their lives, might have at least some personal opinion, if not a good or artistic one.

Personal criticism is always interesting when it is sincere and not too commonplace. A perfect sincerity may perhaps reveal ignorance of art-facts, but it will never reveal that subtle enemy to art, — affectation. As one learns of the arts and of their languages, however, his criticism will grow above the level of his personality, and acquire a distinction, a clear individuality, toward which modern art-

thought is strongly tending. To attain the fearlessness of individual criticism, it is necessary to distinguish between gathering together facts about the arts and learning the truths of art. Facts are a mere matter of accumulation, as one piles together money, or foreign stamps, or "calling lists." Truths are more radically elementary, lying essentially at the root of all things.

When we concern ourselves with facts about the various arts, we may, if we are assiduous, become connoisseurs, — a title of a certain peculiar attainment perhaps; but when we concern ourselves with the truths of art, we grow broad in human sympathy and human helpfulness, we concern ourselves with the message which the art-work conveys. We demand that there always be intention; for where this is lacking, or indefinite, or debased, of what use an acre of paint and canvas, a ton of plaster and marble, a world full of scraping catgut and wheezy brass?

If one should disclose a secret, what harm, so the audience keep it well. The

---

laity know not how many mistakes are hung on exhibition walls, or put upon pedestals, or protected by footlights. A great multitude of art-attempters are practicing before us, and we are not clever enough to suspect it. Small wonder that audiences do not relish all they see and hear! No true artist ever practices before his audience; he keeps his completed efforts for them, for he holds his art too high to send any crippled or incomplete work into the world. It were perhaps too bold to follow this out in detail; if it suggest a more careful inspection of all art-works, it will suffice. It is not lack of execution, primarily, which is condemned, though one has a right to demand a certain degree of technique in an artist, as one would in an engineer or a brick-layer; but it is utter lack of expression, which is the death-blow to art, which is in truth no art, and less than none. Good artists err sometimes through excess of expressed emotion, but there is always enough of intellect behind this to forgive the exuberance. Shall we not forgive, then, the little lack of

sureness in line, delicacy in tint, purity in tone, — things which come readily enough with training, if the thought and the feeling be true?

“How shall we know the true?” Phidias can teach us much, modern chiselers perhaps more; Raphael can teach us much, modern colorists perhaps more; Homer and Virgil and Dante have much to give, Shakespeare and Browning and Lanier far more; Beethoven and Wagner — what do we know of them?

## THE TALENT OF ART APPRECIATION

---

THIS talent is the most valuable possession of the artist's audience; and while the power to create and the ability to produce are given to the artist, the gift of this talent to the audience is of scarcely less worth. As audience we have belittled our own gift, and in comparison magnified the gift of the artist. We forget that when we apprehend an artist's meaning, when we grasp powerfully his aim and comprehend his art, we then see as he saw, hear as he heard, feel as he felt, and live for the time as he himself lived. We are in such close sympathy with him and with his art, that we live on the same plane with himself, and



thus our gift to receive raises itself to the greatness of his gift to give.

“ I have not chanted verse like Homer, no —  
Nor swept string like Terpander, no — nor carved  
And painted men like Phidias and his friend :  
I am not great as they were, point by point,  
But I have entered into sympathy  
With these four, running these into one soul,  
Who separate ignored each other's arts.  
Say, is it nothing that I know them all ? ”

While to the artist his one separate art means the whole world, and into it he translates all life, to the audience, entering by sympathy into every art, is given the broader knowledge and sympathy with life itself through the reading of it translated into many arts and interpreted by many artists. But this reading of life in art, though the inclination toward it may come by nature, the cultivation of it, exactly like the cultivation of the gift of the artist, must be a matter of method and attention, in order to receive the reflected benefit which such attention invariably produces in the personal culture of the audience. There are no means so potent toward refinement and growth, so helpful toward progress and development,

as the free and unprejudiced use of the eyes and ears, when these have by thorough training been brought into such close communion with thought and feeling as to be fitted to receive spontaneously the directness of art's expressions.

Far too little has been made of this talent of art appreciation, and too few audiences have deemed it worthy of culture for its own sake. We envy this man's gift of song, that one's gift of words, another's skill in modeling; and, in our envy, neglect the very gift which we ourselves possess to see and hear and appreciate all that these three can express.

The audience is not altogether to blame for this habit of neglect, or for this exaltation of the artist above his audience, for it is in reality largely the fault of the artists that this separateness has come about. Artists have been rather unbending in their attitude toward the uninitiated. They have accorded no one the entrance to art's magic realms who has not gained that entrance by the same long and oft-times tedious road which they themselves have traveled. They

are largely responsible for their audience's ignorance of their art, for they not unfrequently condemn any effort to understand art, except the mechanical method of strait-laced technique which they themselves have adopted. "Do not talk about paintings" they say, "but paint. Do not talk about music, but play." This may be all very well from their point of view; but from the audience's point of view, it is not well at all.

An artist with his wealth of artistic taste, feeling, and inspiration, creates, and perhaps knows not the value, humanly speaking, of his own creation. True, the artistic creating faculty is in itself far from critical. Wagner says: "Believe me, there is no greater delight than the completely uncritical frame of mind of the artist while creating." Still, no artist more diligently than Wagner tried in the moments between inspirations, — the moments which were not uncritical, — to teach men to understand art, — not his own art alone (which he so confidently dedicated, not to artists, not to connoisseurs, but to the people, the mass of

humankind), but all art in its highest and broadest possibilities.

It is a very hopeful sign that to-day there are many artists who are willing to lay aside chisel, brush, and pen, and talk kindly and familiarly with their audiences; and it is doubtful whether anything they do in marble, color, or tone ever proves so widely beneficial in art's progress as do these kindly and helpful talks. Aside from the benefit to the audience, these give at the same time an added power to the artist; for, open a man's eyes, unstop his ears, and you have his inner self within your power, and can, if you choose, send in, through the newly awakened senses, a first impression tremendously strong and of very lasting power.

As for the talk of the audience, one might say that there has always been enough of this, for every art-work is surrounded by a ceaseless chatter and hubbub of many voices, proclaiming first this thing, then that, and in the end,—nothing. As audience let us have the discretion to keep silent when we have really nothing

to say. Let us keep art, at least, apart from the fashion of chatter, for chattering audiences can never be touched very deeply.

When we hear in a picture gallery some ignorant but didactically inclined informer start his absurd harangue for the benefit of the bystanders, the ludicrousness of it appeals to us strongly enough. We pity the crowd, that they shall carry away with them these "false notions." But let us listen when some student speaks low with his friends, —

"There's a thing that's fine! I like that, you know. See how strong the figure of Adam is; the shoulder muscles are superb; and the Eve, bending, how tender and sorrowful! and Abel's figure — did you ever see anything in plaster so limp, so heavy, and utterly dead? See how the thumb falls inwards toward the palm, always a sign of death. Barrias is a master!"

Ignorance stands around, listening, as ignorance is always listening the world over. It is often ready enough to be filled and have the reproach of its empti-



*THE FIRST BURIALS.*







ness taken away from it, God knows! The common crowds, whose one poor motive, curiosity, leads them sometimes toward works of art (for they would see what the rich buy and put in their houses), have little hope or thought to understand such things. Their poor dull eyes, dazed by the unaccustomed splendors, are sightless indeed, until some little spark like this chances to light upon them, and the open-eyed wonderment grows, and they too learn to look somewhat for themselves.

Never until we learn to get something out of art and all arts *for ourselves*, shall we learn to increase this talent, to cultivate this our gift. Every audience should get from art something personal and good, something they can claim sincerely as their own. Sincerity in social life is a rare trait. Sincerity of art appreciation is equally rare. It is a matter of growth; but growth comes only with individual and consciously directed effort.

If every girl who spends an hour or two a day in finger gymnastics on a piano, would spend half that time in trying to

find out what music means, what sound is, what tone intends, how phrases and movements are formed of it, and what they convey, how the composer uses them and to what end, musical appreciation would grow marvelously. What a difference a little such study would make in the critical task of the average concert audience! Small wonder that concerts are stupid to many people; so would a lecture in Greek be, and for precisely the same reason.

To appreciate with any sort of discrimination, one must know. The instinct to enjoy is merely the embryo from which this growth is to spring. Our inherent natural inclinations may lead us to partiality toward the grind-organ or the orchestra, the nonsense jingle or Browning and Shakespeare; but our inherent natural inclinations are sometimes a better guide-post to our inefficiencies than to our possibilities. We have far outgrown the *naïveté* of the age which believes that "reading and writing come by nature." We have arrived at the knowledge that this talent of art appreciation is a matter of culture, and no

---

further excuse remains for its neglect than lack of opportunity; and this is now a very lame excuse for even the most out-of-the-way nineteenth century audience.

## APPLAUSE

---

“An audience shows its high-water mark of culture and appreciation by its applause, — not hand-clapping alone, for intense silence is far stronger testimony, and the little holding-of-the-breath-to-listen is of deeper meaning than either.”

AS audience we have seen and heard something, perhaps much; what of our applause?

The artist has played his part; his work is done. Struggling with the heart-gasps of many failures, he has finally arrived at a worthy accomplishment. Seeing all things, feeling all things, wrestling with all problems, he has put before us on art's stage the best of life, that we may see and feel, and so learn. He draws our attention from nature for a moment only to show us the content of nature, that

we may see her again in clearer vision. He draws our attention from men for a while to show us all that is in man, that we may live more wisely among our fellows. He draws our thought toward God that he may show us some Pisgah height his soul achieves, that we too may climb.

Into his marble he has breathed his own breath of life, into color he has wrought his utmost strength, in words and tones he has poured forth his very life. Freely he has given his life-blood, and for us; and now, in the end, is it nothing to us, to us who pass by?

We are gay, we are trivial, we would be amused. We demand of art that she shall entertain us, and sometimes she has seemed to stoop. The signal is given. The curtain is raised. She has come before us and bowed to our will. She has showed us pretty things, gay things, pleasant things, things as we like to look upon them through the veil of seeming; when, lo, in the midst of our gayety, without forewarning or proclamation, something steals out upon art's stage, dimly visible at first, then clearer and more

clear, until, flooded with a light we know not, we see the world and life in proportions new and strange. Laughter is done. The trivial speech we would have said dies on our lips, and in our hearts grows a joy surpassing all that we have known before, for the veil has been rent for us, we have awakened, and now, at last, we see. *One* has touched our eyes. *One* has touched our ears. We dare not deny him.

The artist's work is done. He awaits our applause. Shall we let him stand that little uncertain moment, — that moment of yearning and pain? Shall we busy ourselves with our wraps, and let him turn from us in despair? — that despair, so great that only the artist-soul can conceive its depths. Shall we hesitate until too late, when he is gone? Oh, that the artist-cry could reach the hearts of all audiences, to teach them the tremendous power of encouragement they wield in this testimony of acclaim; that they might prize it too dearly to dissipate it in showers upon the mediocre and debased, but keep it to assuage the thirst of the

---

great souls who have given a new hope, a new joy to life!

The artist awaits our applause. It is his right, — more divine than all rights of kings, more human than any right of man. Let us hold it very dear, this our power of giving, that we may give it intelligently and heartily, and always to that which is best, for “excellence of all things is one.”



## ENCORE

---

THE curtain is down. The audience still lingers. It pleads for an encore. Again and again the applause fills the Temple of Fame, — handclapping now, with loud clamoring of tongues. Happy for the audience if they have not aroused themselves too late. Happy for the audience if the artist be not already gone, though they have still an abiding consciousness of his presence.

Remember back to the world's great audiences, and one finds too often a surprised silence or a dull endurance. The applause has often come late, very late. It is long ere the wild cry encore! encore! rings out through the world, — the sure attest of lasting fame.

We as audience have yet this one thing

---

to learn, — to grasp intensely the content of the moment, for there can be in reality no repetition, and to applaud to-day and now, lest our delayed encore vibrate against irresponsible walls, when the heart for whom the applause was meant is gone past recall.



"THE artist has the power of seeing beforehand a yet unshapen world, of tasting beforehand the joys of a world yet unborn, through the stress of his desire for Growth. But his joy is in imparting, and . . . so he finds, too, the hearts, ay finds the senses to whom he can impart his message."

RICHARD WAGNER.





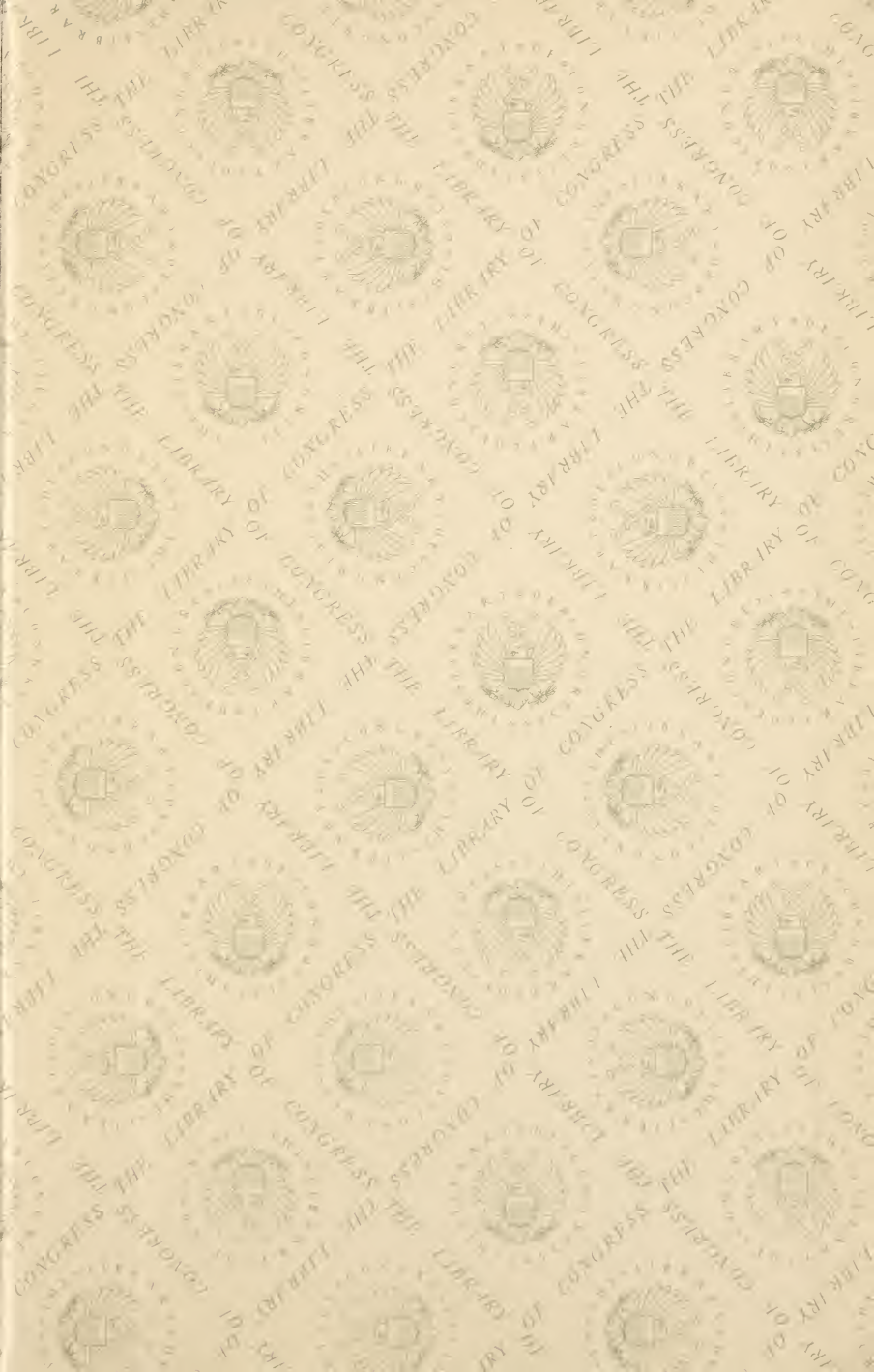
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Dec. 2004

## **PreservationTechnologies**

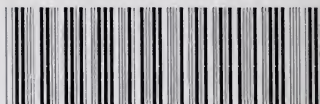
**A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION**

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 532 262 3

